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AN EXPOSITION WITH Practicall Observations

CONTINUED UPON

The Twenty-second, Twenty-third, Twenty-fourth, Twenty-fifth, and Twenty-sixth Chapters of the Book of

JOB:

BEING

The Summe of Thirty-seven Lectures, delivered at *Magnus* neare LONDON Bridge.

By JOSEPH CARYL, *Preacher of the Word, and Pastour of the Congregation there.*

ISAIAH 40. 8.

The Grasse withereth, the flower fadeth: But the word of Our God shall stand for ever.

LONDON;

Printed by *M. Simmons*, and are to be sould at her house in *Aldersgate street* the next dore to the *Guilded Lyon*.

1659.

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER.

TO

Thoſe eſpecially of this CITIE, who yet continue to promote this WORKE.

S the Apoſtle Peter *(writing to all the Saints) ſayd,* This ſecond Epiſtle, *ſo I may ſay (and have learned, I hope, to ſay it without boaſting or comparing)* This ſeventh Epiſtle beloved) I now write unto you in all which my deſire is to ſtirre up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindfull of the words which were ſpoken, and of the troubles

which were endured before, by this (Great Example of suffering) Holy and patient Job. *And though* seven, *being a perfect number, might hint me a faire pretence to sit downe and doe no more, yet I am further from thinking what I have done* perfect, *then I am from desisting (in reference to my owne intention) to perfect (according to that measure of light which shall be given in) what is yet to doe. 'Tis A Generall mercy, that in an Age wherein the* sword *hath been called out to doe and hath done* so much, *there hath been not only leysure, but encouragement for* The pen *to doe* this little. *And 'tis* your speciall honour, *who still promote this, or any worke of this kinde, that while ye have been engaged in so great a charge for the maintaining of a Warre, and the preserving of peace, ye have not excused your selves in this poynt of charge. And (possibly) it will be no dishonour to this Age in future Ages, nor to This Nation in Forraine Nations, to see or heare, that our spirits have neither been hurried nor skarred by warres and changes into an indisposition or incomposednes for workes of such seriousnes and retirement. What* Daniel *prophecyed of the building of the Wall of* Jerusalem *whether literal or mysticall) is true of this* Paper-wall *(which is no stranger to*

to Jerusalem) *it hath been built* in Troublous Times. *Except the Lord build both house and wall, they labour in vaine that build in calmest times; and where the Lord buildeth (though by weake and unskilfull hands) labour shall not be vaine in stormy times; it shall neither be labour in vaine, because unfinisht for use; nor shall it be labour in vaine, because unusefull when 'tis finisht. The blessing of God (and without that nothing can) delivereth all our honest labours from these two vanities, and his bounty delivereth them from a Third. For while we are stedfast and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the worke of the Lord, as we may have a strong confidence that our labour shall not be in vaine to others, so a full assurance that it shall not be in vaine to our selves. Plaine-hearted* Jacob *labouring in the integrity of his soule for* Laban, *onely in keeping sheepe, though his wages (as envying that he thrived so fast) was changed ten times, yet he thrived the faster, and he* who came over Jordan with his staffe, became two bands. To be sure we can never want either pay or reward for that worke which is a reward and can pay it selfe. *And though, I know (and cannot but thankefully acknowledge Honoured Sirs) that this long con-*

tinued

tinued worke hath been an occasion of considerable expence to you; yet I much beleeve that it will not prove any thing of losse to any of you. There is (*saith* Solomon) that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more then is meate and it tendeth to poverty. *They that scatter to doe good, sow what they scatter; and that which is sowne in a right soyle increaseth to a harvest. They that withhold what they have, more then is meete, shall not hold what they have, but meete with poverty. As that which is given in charity, for the reliefe of the poore, so that which is given in a due tempered liberality for the use of the publicke, is lent to the Lord, and he will surely repay all that he hath borrowed.* Therefore give a portion to seven and also to eight (*whether indigent persons, or pious uses*) for ye know not what evill shall be upon the earth. *If evill come upon the earth, they will be found the best husbands of their goods, who have laid up most in heaven; and if good continue upon the earth, they will not finde any misse of what is so laid up. I write this, not as either fearing an abatement of my owne private interest, nor as hoping or looking after an increase of it: but only as a gratefull testimony of what ye have freely done for*

for the carrying on of this worke, and as an argument that in so doing ye have not done either unwisely or unprofitably for your selves.

As for this peice of the worke now given in to your hands, and published to the view of others, I shall only say, That herein ye have an end of the Controversall or disputative part of this Booke. Jobs *friends have now finisht their last reply upon him, and* Job *hath finisht his last answer to them. For though he continueth speaking five whole Chapters longer, yet he speaketh, rather to the generall state of the Question, then to any of their particular objections, as may appeare hereafter (if God give leave) in the Explication of that large and patheticall discourse. And it was well, that his Opponents would make an end somewhere, and leave what they had offered to the judgeme it of equall and indifferent moderators. Which may be a just rebuke upon many in this Age, who will dispute and draw the saw of contention everlastingly; as if they thought it a dishonour, when they have said all, to say no more, or were resolved never to be satisfied, how much or how often soever they have been answered.* Moderate and modest disputing tends to healing, but the itch of disputing (*which an Ho-*

nourable and learned Knight, deceased, would have engraven upon his Tombe-stone) leaves nothing but a scabby soarnesse upon the minds of men, and doth rather widen differences then compose them. Abner (*eyther grieved or wearyed with the tedious protraction of a civill warre*) called to *Joab* (*Captaine Generall of* Davids *Army*) shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not, that it will be bitternesse in the end, how long shall it be ere thou bid the people returne from following their brethren? *We have but too much cause to call and cry upon some* Leaders in the Scholasticall Warre, Shall your tongues and pens devoure for ever? know ye not that it is unpleasant to many in the way, and is like to be bitternesse to more in the end? When will ye return from following your Brethren? Eliphaz, Bildad, *and* Zophar *followed their Brother* Job *long, but they gave it over at last, and returned from following him. Though, I confesse, there is a necessity of* contending, *and that* (*as the Apostle* Jude *exhorts*) earnestly, *both by speech and pen,* for the faith once delivered to the Saints; *Yet there are many contentions, which it had been well if they had never been begun, or at least quickly ended. And when men revile and blaspheme*

pheme rather then argue, It is best to take up that Counsel which good Hezekiah *gave in commandement concerning* Raling Rabsakeh, Answer them not. Solomon *hath given us the full state of this duty in a seeming contradiction, while in one verse he forbids us to answer a Foole, and in the next bids us answer him.* The foole must be answered according to his folly, *but the answer must be framed and drawn up by the strength of reason and wisedome; that is, the foole must be made to see his folly, lest he grow up and be confirmed in his opinion, that what he saith is true, because he is not shewed the error of it; yet,* The foole must not be answered according to his folly, *that is, if he speake or write vainly and revilingly, shewing rather the frothynesse of his wit, or the over-flowing of his gall, then the sobriety and soundnesse of his Judgement, he that answers him must not conforme either speech or stile to his,* lest he be like unto him; *The answer which we give to another, beareth the image and is the measure of our selves; And our ill mannaging of a matter renders us as bad as others, though our opinion be better.* Our Master Christ being reviled reviled not againe, *we his Disciples and followers ought to intimate him, and* not to render

evill for evill, or rayling for rayling, but contrariwise to blesse. *While we are called to contending, let us doe it fayrly and candidly; Christ would have us shew love and tendernes to our brethren, as well as zeale for Him and his Truth. They cannot but doe so, who stand up for truth purely as 'tis the truth of Christ, rather then as it is their own opinion. And (though I am loath to be suspitious, yet) I greatly suspect, that the reason why many cast so much dirt and dishonour upon the persons of their Brethren, while they appeare as Champions for the Truth, proceeds from a secret desire to procure honour to their own persons rather then the advancement of Truth. Peace and truth are a blessed payre, and were we more for peace we should sooner find out the truth; But so long as men contend rather for a party or an opinion then for truth, rather for victory and the Maistery then for truth, rather for honour (I had almost said humour) and interest then for truth, as we are sure not to meete with peace, so we are extreamely hindred and puzzl'd in seeking out the truth. The most probable way to keepe downe some ill-sented opinions, is to lay down all disputes about them; especially, now, when most if not all Controversies on foote, have been sifted to the*

branne.

branne. What therefore remaines but that we waite for light and conviction from heaven, looking how the holy Spirit of truth and peace, will state and determine those poynts upon the consciences of men; And I am fully satisfyed that if all would suffer their consciences to answer and reply rather then their conceits and parts, most of our disputers in this age would (like Jobs friends) dispute no more. O That we could a while leave arguing with and answering one another especially rayling upon and scoffing at one another) and fall to praying for & loving one another, according to the utmost tender of Gospel-love. For as love is the complement or fulfilling of the whole Law of God, the scope or intentionall end of the Commandement, so it would be the conclusion or finishing and determining end of all the Controversies which arise or are started among men. And I conceive that (in most poynts of difference) a severe and Magisteriall imposing of an opinion upon others in way of dispute, is as bad and as un-Gospel-like, as to impose it upon any by way of power.

Beloved and Honoured Friends, ye may perceive how farre my joy, for being arrived at the end of this dispute between Job *and his friends,*

hath

hath transported me to presse for at least an amicable carrying onne, if not an end of all our disputes; and that (as the Apostle adviseth) speaking the truth *(and for the truth or* Truthing it*)* in love, we may grow up into him in all things, which is the head even Christ; From whom the whole body fitly joyned together and compacted by that which every joynt supplyeth, according to the effectuall working of every part, maketh encrease of the body to the edifying of it selfe in love. *Love is a knitting, and therefore an increasing grace. That which uniteth many in one, must needs* edifie That one, *which is the result of such a union. As faith is that Grace by which we receive all from God, so love is that grace by which we conveigh and divide good among our selves. There is not the least joynt in the mysticall body of Christ, but giveth some supply to the whole, because love is the ligament of it. As we can want nothing while (as the Apostle* Jude *exhorts) we* keep our selves in the love of God, *(whether we understand him of the love of God to us, or of our love to God, makes no difference as to this matter) so we can hardly want any thing, while we keepe our selves in the love of one another. That all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; may,*

may, by the presence and influence of the Spirit of love, not only keepe themselves, but increase in the love of God, and in the love of one another, till we are fully growne up in him in all things, which is the head even Christ, is the wish and prayer, as it ought to be the endeavour of all and of him who would

SIRS

The 18th of the Third Moneth commonly called *May*. 1655.

Serve you Faithfully

in love

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practicall Obſervations

UPON

The Twenty-two, Twenty-three. Twenty-foure, Twenty five, and Twenty ſix Chapters of the Booke of

JOB.

JOB, *Chap.* 22. *Verſ.* 1, 2, 3, 4.

1. *Then* Eliphaz *the Temanite anſwered and ſaid,*

2. *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable unto himſelfe?*

3. *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him that thou makeſt thy wayes perfect?*

4. *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? or will he enter with thee into judgment?*

ELIPHAZ now enters his third and laſt conteſt with Job; in which ſome tell us that he behaveth himſelfe like a man who ſeeks Victory rather then Truth: who though he hath been ſufficiently anſwered, ye will not ſeem to be overcome; yea that he takes up the ſame weapons to maintain this third, with which he maintain'd his two former Encounters; The firſt in the fourth and fifth *Chapters*, and the ſecond in the 15th, as if he were reſolved to contradict

tradict, though he could not confute the reasons wherewith *Job* had made his defence.

But as such a carriage as this in Disputation is altogether vaine in it selfe, so it is most uncomely in a wise and godly man: who ought not to refuse truth and reason though spoken by an Adversary, but rather modestly to sit down and confesse his own errour and mistaking: And therefore though *Eliphaz* in this answer or triplication doth but roule the same stone, and move upon the same hinge in generall; still adudging *Job* to suffer for his sinne, and to be punisht as an evill doer, yet he puts all into a new method, and varies the sceane or the manner of his argumentation, which may be reduced to this forme; as if *Eliphaz* had said: *O* Job! *if thou sufferest all these evills for some cause (as certainly thou dost, for these things could not come by chance, but by the wise disposure and providence of God) then that cause or reason for which thou sufferest, must either be found in God or in thy self: If thou sayest the reason is in God, and that he doth it by his prerogative, thou dost rashly intrude thy selfe into his secrets, and art over-bold or curious in searching into his hidden counsels; and when thou hast made out thy conjectures, we may as easily deny as thou dost affirme. but if thou hast recourse to, and reflectest upon thy own selfe for the cause of thy sorrowes and sufferings, surely thou canst find out or pitch upon nothing else but thy sinfulnesse and abounding transgressions, which while thou refusest to acknowledge, thou dost but harden thy heart against God, and groweſt impatient under the rebukes of his afflicting hand, therefore I admonish thee to repent,* &c. This seemes to be the summe of that whole discourse which *Eliphaz* gives in this Chapter, as will further appear in the explication of the parts.

Again we may contract his scope and give it in this briefe; Job *having constantly affirmed against his friends, that God equally afflicts the righteous and the wicked: and having said (which might have gained respect to what he was about to say) that he pleaded for God* (Chap. 21. 4. *As for me, is my complaint to man, or for man, no; it is to God, or in Gods behalf.*) *Hereupon* Eliphaz *taxes him with this presumption, as if he would needs undertake to be a patron for God, and so to bring him in some advantage, or to stand him in stead, for the maintaining of his cause; therefore he begins his Speech with this chiding expostulation; Can man be profitable unto God? or (suppose thou*

thou wert (which I shall presently disprove) as thou hast often boasted, righteous, yet) is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?

This seems to be the intent of the whole Chapter, in which we may further take notice of two distinct parts. The first is reprehensory, *Eliphaz* reproves and rebukes *Job* sorely, to the end of the 20. verse.

The second is hortatory; *Eliphaz* moveth *Job* earnestly to repentance, in which he coucheth many promises, and gives Assurance that it shall not be in vain, from the 20th *ver.* to the end of the Chapter; *Acquaint now thy selfe with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee,* &c.

The first part, his reprehension begins at the second *vers.*

V. 2. *Can a man be profitable unto God?* There are three readings of these words. First thus, *Can a man be compared to God?* Some labour much in the defence of this reading, but I shall not stay upon it. For though it be a truth that man cannot be compared to God, how wise or how good soever he is. What's the wisdome or the goodnesse of man to God? Yet the Originall Text doth not freely yeeld it selfe up to that translation which bears this truth.

Numquid Deo comparari potest homo etiam cum perfecta fuerit scientia. Vulg.

2. Master *Broughton* renders thus. *Can the humane wight teach the Omnipotent?* that word which we render *to be profitable*, he, to *Teach*; The Chaldee Paraphrase favours this translation, and some render it so in both parts of the verse; *Can a man teach God As he that is wise may teach himselfe?* If a man should be so bold to take upon him to teach God, would God regard his teachings? but I shall pass by this also, especially considering that *Eliphaz* had no reason to tax *Job* with such a presumption, as if he had taken upon him to direct God how to order his affayres; when as *Job* himselfe (*hap.* 21. *vers.* 22.) had strongly repressed and condemned such a boldnesse. *Shall any teach God knowledge? Job* having so lately exalted God above mans teaching (as was shewed in opening that verse) it is not probable that *Eliphaz* should reprove him, as conceiting himselfe wise enough to teach God: Or that he thought *Job* either had done, or was about to doe that which with his last breath almost, he confessed no man could do.

Quidam verbum יסבון *pro docere exponunt in utroque hemistichio.* Merc.

The third is our reading, *Can a man be profitable unto God?* Can a man? he doth not mean an ordinary weake, sickly, fraile man; but a man, yea any man at his best: the word here used

notes a man in his health, ſtrength, and glory; a man in the flower and perfection not only of his naturall abilities, but in the richeſt furniture and array of his acquired, yea inſpired abilities. Take this man, a man of theſe attainments, a man thus accompliſht, and *Can be profitable to God*; For as when the Pſalmiſt ſaith (*Pſal.* 33 17.) *A Horſe is a vain thing to ſave a man* By the Horſe there, we are not to underſtand a lean, poor, weak, ſlow-pac'd horſe, or a ſtrong, ſwift horſe unman'd; Such a horſe is indeed a very vain thing to ſave a man by; Such a horſe may do a man more hurt then help when he comes into danger; but the Pſalmiſt means a horſe of the greateſt ſtrength courage, and ſwiftneſſe: A horſe exactly man'd, and taught all his poſtures, even ſuch a horſe is a vain thing to ſave a man. Again, when the Scripture ſaith, *Chriſt came to ſave ſinners*, we muſt not underſtand it of leſſer, lower, or of the ordinary ſort of ſinners only, but even of the higheſt and the greateſt, for ſuch Jeſus Chriſt came to ſave as well as the leaſt of ſinners. So here when 'tis ſaid, *Can a man be profitable to God?* we muſt expound it of the higheſt of the learneſt, of the holieſt, of the beſt of men; *Can a man be profitable unto God?* The word is *El, The ſtrong God*; Can the ſtrongeſt man be profitable unto the ſtrong, the Mighty, the Omnipotent, the Almighty God? *Can he be profitable?* Can he bring any advantage, gain, or profit to God? *Should he reaſon with unprofitable talke* (ſaith *Eliphaz* Ch. 15. 3.) or with words that bring in no profit? A word of the ſame root, ſignifies a *Treaſurer*, who is a keeper of publick profits (*Eſay* 22. 15.) *Goe, get thee unto this Treaſurer even unto Shebna. Can a man be profitable?* Thus *Eliphaz* reproves *Job* for inſiſting ſo often upon his own innocency, as if that were an advantage to God? As if he had ſaid, how holy or righteous ſoever any man is, the Lord receives no advantage by him. So that *Eliphaz* (it ſeemes) apprehended *Job* truſting or boaſting of ſomewhat in himſelfe, as if he had thought God his debtor, or that he had done ſomewhat for which God was beholding to him. And upon this ground, that God is debtor, or beholding to no man; *Eliphaz* undertakes *Job*: And though his ſuppoſition was falſe, yet his poſition was true, and gives us this profitable obſervation,

That the beſt of men cannot oblige God, or merit any thing at his hand.

That

That which is our duty to do, cannot merit when we have done it. We cannot oblige either God or man by performing our own obligation. Thus Chriſt argues, *Luk.* 17. 7. *Which of you having a ſervant ploughing or feeding Cattell, will ſay unto him by and by when he is come from the field, goe and ſit down to meat? And will not ſay unto him, make ready wherewith I may ſup, and gird thy ſelfe, and ſerve me, till I have eaten and drunken, and afterward thou ſhalt eat and drinke. Doth he thanke that ſervant becauſe he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewiſe yee, when yee have done all theſe things which are commanded you, ſay, we are unprofitable ſervants, we have done that which was our duty to doe.* Where Chriſt proves, that becauſe the ſervant had done no more then was his duty to doe, therefore he did not merit in doing it. *When you have done all that is commanded you, ſay yee are unprofitable ſervants.* He that doth all thoſe things that are commanded him, is *a man indeed, a man of worth, a man of men*, yet (let that be granted that he reacheth to the utmoſt line of the Command) he is an unprofitable ſervant, he hath but done his duty.

There is another parable in this Goſpell of *Luke* that ſeems to be ſomewhat oppoſite to this (*Chap.* 12. *v.* 36, 37.) *And ye your ſelves be like unto men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Bleſſed are thoſe ſervants, whom when the Lord cometh, he ſhall find ſo watching* that is, at their worke. Watching is not meant here of a bare waking, or not being aſleep, for a man may watch, in that ſenſe, and yet be as bad as a ſleeper: To be found awake, and yet idle, to be found awake yet doing nothing, is as blameable as to be found aſleepe: So that to be found watching is to be found intent upon, and labouring in the worke of the Lord. *Bleſſed be thoſe ſervants whom when their Lord cometh ſhall be find ſo watching*) what will he doe? *Verily I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelfe, and make them to ſit down to meat, and will come forth to ſerve them.* In the 17th *Chap.* Chriſt ſaith; If a ſervant have been hard at worke in the ſervice of his Lord, even as a man that is come from Plow, or from feeding his Cattell, yet his Maſter doth not ſay to him, ſit downe to meate, but firſt bids him gird himſelfe and ſerve him, and afterward goe to meate. But here 'tis ſaid, the Lord preſently

sently girds himself, and makes his servants sit down to meat, and will come and serve them: so that here he speaks, as if the Lord were much beholden to these servants. whereas before he speakes of them as unprofitable servants, to whom he was not at all beholding.

For the clearing of these two Parables, we are to distinguish them by their scopes. The scope of the Parable in the 12 h *Chapter* is to shew, that the diligent servant shall receive much from the hands of the Lord, or that the labour of the diligent servant shall not be in vain, or unprofitable to him.

But the scope of the Parable in the 17th Chap. is to shew, that the most diligent servant cannot doe any thing that is profitable unto his Lord, He may doe that which may be profitable to himselfe, but he can doe nothing that can be profitable to his Lord, that's the scope of the 17th Chapter, which falls in fully with the Text, and observations that I am now upon. There is a wide difference between these two parables. To shew what a dilligent servant may expect, is one thing, and what the most diligent servant can challenge or require is another. For indeed those servants in the 12 h Chapter, to whom the Lord administers the Supper, or to whom he ministers at Supper, must say that they are unprofitable servants to the Lord; though they are to acknowledge (to the praise of their Lord) that his service hath not been unprofitable unto them, and they must say so upon these considerations.

First he is their Lord, they his servants, not their owne (1 *Cor.* 6.20.) *Yea are bought with a price, yea are not your own, therefore glorifie God in your bodies & in your spirits which are Gods.* God is the owner of our bodies and spirits, our selves are the Lords. Now if we our selves, our bodies, and our spirits are the Lords, then much more are our services his. If the person be anothers, all the work done by him must be his too.

Secondly, The house wherein these servants are feasted is the Lords. The whole fabrick of heaven and earth is his house, He hath set it up to entertain and feast his people in.

Thirdly, All the cheere and good things with which the Lord feasteth his servants (all the comforts which grace holds out in this life, or glory in the next life) are of his own provision, the whole furniture of the Table is of his cost and charge,

charge, therefore they are obliged to their Lord, not their Lord to them, he is indeed profitable unto them, but they are not profitable unto him: They by their sloath and idleness might deserve to be sent supperlesse and hungry to bed, but by all their pains and diligence they could not deserve their Supper; *Can a man be profitable unto God?*

Secondly, Observe,

That God is absolutely Independent and perfect in himself.

If there be any impossibility that man should be profitable unto God, then he is Self-sufficient, and altogether Independent, in reference to man: He that cannot receive any addition is perfect in himselfe, and he that is self-sufficient, needs not: to receive any addition from another, is an argument of imperfection. And seeing God neither receives, nor can receive any thing from another, he must needs be perfect in himselfe. *David* (*Psal* 16.2.) speaking of himselfe (as the type of Christ) saith, *O my soule, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord* (that is, thou art my Portion and my All) but *my goodnesse extendeth not to thee*, I am not able to doe any good which reacheth to thy benefit, or encreaseth thy happinesse, for thou art mine, In the 50th *Psalme* the Lord asserts this his own independency; *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine and the fulnesse thereof*: if I had any hunger (that is, any defect upon me) I need not goe to the creature to ask a supply, I could supply my-selfe if there were any need, but ther's none: The Lord he is infinitely above all hunger, above all wants and defects whatsoever. He indeed threatens Idolaters, that he *will famish all their gods* (Zeph. 2. 11.) Idols shall be hungry, they shall be famisht, and have none to administer any thing to them. This the Lord doth, when he with-draws their respect and worship, that name and reputation which once they had in the world from them; worship is the food of Idols, that keeps liveless Idols (as it were) alive, and therefore false gods are famished, when their false worship is cast down; but who can famish the Lord? If I were hungry, *&c.* I would not tell you; *Can man be profitable unto God?*

But it may be objected; Cannot a man be profitable to God? is man no advantage, no helpe to him? why then (*Judg.* 5. 23.) Sings *Deborah, Curse ye Meroz, said the Angell of the Lord, curse*

curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty, It ſhould ſeem then that the Lord had need of the help of theſe inhabitants of *Meroz*, and if they had come forth, it had been an advantage to him, why elſe were they curſed for not coming forth to the helpe of the Lord?

I anſwer, man is ſaid to helpe the Lord, when he helps in the Lords cauſe. Perſonally the Lord needeth not my helpe, but the Lord may be helped relatively, in his cauſe, and in his people. Thus we help the Lord, when we help man, when we help the Church, and people of God; It is our honour as well as our duty, to help his people, and give aſſiſtance in his Cauſe, This the Lord takes ſo well at our hands, that he reckons it as help given to himſelf.

Again, if we conſider the helpe as given to the Lords people we are not to conceive that the Lord needed the helpe of theſe men of *Meroz*, as if he could not help them himſelfe without the aſſiſtance or ayd of man. For when he ſeeth *that there is no man, then his own arme brings Salvation*, Iſa. 59. 16. 'Tis the duty of man to come forth and draw his Sword in the Lords quarrell againſt the mighty, but the Lord needeth not the ſword of man to ſubdue the mightieſt.

Secondly It may be objected; *Cannot man be profitable unto God?* he ſpeaks of the Church of the *Jewes*, in ſuch language as implyes them a profit to him. *Exod.* 19. 5. *Now if yee will obey my voyce indeed, and keepe my Covenant, then ſhall you be a peculiar treaſure unto me above all people.* And is there no profit in a treaſure? Again, *Deut* 32. 9. *The Lords portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* Hath a man no profit by his portion? no advantage by his Inheritance? Now if the Lords People be his portion, his Inheritance, his Treaſure, his peculiar ſpeciall treaſure, how then can it be ſaid, they are no profit, no advantage to him?

I anſwer, the Lords people are his treaſure, not b cauſe they enrich him, but becauſe he hath a high eſteeme of them. The Lords People are his treaſure, not becauſe they profit him, but becauſe he protects them: If I ſay to a man, you ſhall be a treaſure to me; I may doe it, not becauſe I expect any profit from him, but becauſe I have a high eſteeme of him, and reſolve

reſolve to protect and defend him as I doe my own portion and treaſure; In this ſenſe doth the Lord ſay of his people, *Ye are my treaſure.* We eſteeme treaſure, and treaſures are under protection, leſt any take them from us. Thus the Lord ſpeakes of his people, not that he hath any profit or gain by them, as men who ordinarily have portions and Inheritance in Fields or Houſes which are their ſtock and livelyhood. Indeed there is a Revenue which the Lord hath by his people as they are his portion; that is, a Revenue of glory and honour, not a Revenue of profit. But if you ſay glory and honour is profit, and an advantage to man, is it not then an advantage to God to be glorified by man?

I anſwer, It is no advantage to God when he is glorified by man, Our glorifying of God doth not add any glory to him that he had not, but it is only the ſetting forth of that glory which he had; there is no encreaſe of his fulneſſe by all the honour and glory that the creature gives him. We are commanded to glorifie God. (*Matth.* 5. 16. *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good works and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.*) But God doth not receive any additional glory by us, how much or how clearly ſoever our light ſhineth before men. A candle adds more light to the Sun, then all the creatures in the world can adde to the glory of God, when they have ſtudied his glory, and laboured to glorifie him to the utmoſt all their dayes.

Thirdly, that of *David* may be yet objected, *Pſalm.* 4. 3. *The Lord hath ſet apart for himſelfe the man that is Godly.* And if ſo, then it ſeemes he intends to make ſome profit of him; it is an allusion unto thoſe that vend wares: A merchant looks upon this and that commodity, and then ſaith this is for my turne, this I like, *ſet it apart for me.* Seeing then the Lord ſets the godly apart for himſelfe, it founds as if he meant to make ſome gain or advantage by him.

I anſwer, the meaning of that Scripture is not, that God ſets a godly man apart as one that he gets profit by, but as one that he intends to beſtow mercy upon; or he ſets him apart for ſervice, not for gaine; The Lord ſerves his own ends by the ſervice of man every day, and ſets apart the godly man for his ſpeciall ſervice.

Yet a little further, I ſhall demonſtrate that a man cannot be profitable to God.

Firſt, God had all perfection before man was, therefore man cannot profit God. *Pſal.* 90. 2. *From everlaſting, and to everlaſting thou art God.* that is, thou art infinite in glory and excellency from everlaſting. God was God as much before there was a creature, as he hath been ever ſince the creatures were; therefore creatures adde nothing at all to him.

2. All the goodneſſe and profitableneſſe of man comes from God, therefore no profit goes unto God from man: that's the Apoſtles argument, *Acts* 17. 25. where he ſhews that man cannot advantage God, no not by worſhip *He is not worſhiped with mens hands as though he needed any thing.* What, doe you think God calleth for your worſhip, becauſe he needs your worſhip? or as if he could not tell how to be without your worſhip? Nothing leſſe; *Seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things.* He that gives all things to all men, needs nothing of any man: heres the Apoſtles argument, the Lord giveth out all things, life, breath, and all comforts whatſoever to all men, therefore he needs nothing of any man, no not the worſhip of any man. 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. The Apoſtle aſſigns that reaſon againſt boaſting: *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received, wherefore then doſt thou boaſt?* When doe men boaſt? even when they think they have done God a good turn. *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received? therefore why doſt thou boaſt as if thou hadſt not received it.* What can he receive of us from whom we receive our all? And *though we muſt returne all to him in a way of thankfulneſſe and duty, yet God needs not that we ſhould return any thing to him in a way of largeneſſe or ſupply.*

3. Take this demonſtration of it; they who live much in God, even they (upon the matter) need little or nothing of the creature; they (upon the matter) are Independent as to the creature who depend fully upon the Creator. The good or evill of this world is not much to them, who are much with God. They have but little to doe with the Creature, and can doe well enough without the creature. (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Although the figtree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the Olive ſhall faile, and the fields ſhall yeeld no meate; the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* As if he had ſaid, what if all creature comforts are taken away from me, I can live upon God alone. The life of a believer is much above the creature, how much more is the life of the Creator? The Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) ſpeaking of himſelfe, ſaith, *as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things.* If *Paul* by the high actings of his faith and dependencies upon God could ſay he poſſeſſed all things, while he was as having nothing in the creature. Surely God hath all, when he hath nothing of or from the creature; He may ſay in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, *having nothing (of theſe things) and yet poſſeſſing all things.* Lay theſe two obſervations together.

☞ Firſt, *That the Creature cannot oblige God.*

☞ Secondly, *That God is Independent, abſolute, perfect without the creature,* and the reſult of both will riſe up in theſe eight concluſions.

Firſt, this will follow, *That we ſhould not murmur, nor be diſcontented with our Eſtate* whatſoever it is, why? we are not profitable unto God, we have deſerved nothing at his hand. Diſcontent ariſeth from Pride, from an opinion that we are not anſwered according to our worth; we ſhould never be diſcontented, were we convinced that we are altogether worthleſſe. Do but ſit down in this thought that man cannot be profitable unto God in any ſtate, and then be diſcontented with your ſtate if you can.

Secondly, If the Creature cannot be profitable unto God. Then, *all that God doth for man, yea for Angels, proceedeth from his free grace.* We give him nothing afore-hand, nor any thing afterward, therefore it is grace before, and grace after grace in all. We receive grace when we have no grace, and we receive more grace when we have it; yet by the grace we have we doe not deſerve to receive more; As we received the firſt grace, meerly of grace, ſo we doe the ſecond. No man is afore-hand with God; if any think they are, let them ſhew their Bills, what they have brought in, and it ſhall be acknowledged. *Rom.* 11. 35, 36. *Who hath firſt given, and it ſhall be recompenced to him again?* For *of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.*

Thirdly, If man cannot be profitable unto God, then as

none should dare to come to God in their own worthinesse, so none should fear to come to God because of their unworthinesse. We should not be discouraged, though as yet dead and fruitlesse, though vain and unbelieving; The worst of men should not keep off from God, because they are unprofitable, seeing the best cannot profit him. *If we have done much it is nothing to the Lord: and if we have done nothing, it is no barr to the Lords doing much for us.* God will not turn us back because we bring him nothing, nay he invites us to come without any thing (*Esa.* 55. 1.) *Ho every one that thirsteth, come to the Waters, buy,* &c. Here is buying, but for what? for profit? no, but *come buy wine & milke without money and without Price.* God doth not expect any profit; there is a kinde of buying, but its not for money, nor for money worth. As the Lord sometimes sells his people, so he alwayes sells his graces and comforts, *for naught* (Psal. 44. 12.) *Thou sellest thy people for naught, and dost not encrease thy wealth by their price.* That is, thou leavest thy people under miseries and afflictions, by which it doth not appear that thou getteth any honour. Now as the Lord doth sometimes sell his people, so he also sells his mercy and grace to his people (as to any desert of theirs) *for naught*; he sells without money and without price, therefore be not discourag'd if you have nothing of your own of any worth to present unto him. Say not, *Wherewith shall we come before the Lord?* The poorer you come in your own thoughts, the richer you shall returne; For *he filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich he sendeth empty away.*

Fourthly, if man cannot be profitable unto God, then our gifts and parts, yea our holinesse and graces doe not make us necessary unto God. God may say unto the great Ones of the Earth, I have no need of you, and to the rich I have no need of you, and to the wise, I have no need of you; yea he may say unto the godly and to the holy, I have no need of you neither. There is no creature necessary to God, seeing he cannot only (as we say) live, but live in the heights of happinesse without the Creature

Fiftly, *If no man can be profitable unto God*, then whatsoever God requires of us, he aimes at our profit, and not at his own; all is for us, or for our good, which will appear more fully in the ope-

opening the next clause; *He that is wise may be profitable to himself.* The Lord hath designed all our wisdome and obedience to our own benefit: So *Moses* spake to the people of *Israel* (*Deut.* 6. 24.) *The Lord commanded us to doe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God for our good alwayes, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day.* It is not for the Lords good, but it is for our good that he commands, and we obey. And as the Lord commanded all things in the Law for our good, not for his own: so he commands us to believe the Gospel not for his good, but for our own; he is not to be saved by it, it is we that are to be saved by it. He doth not call us to work as men doe their servants, that he might play the good husband, and get some profit by keeping us hard at labour. Indeed the Lord keepeth his servants hard at labour night and day, they must be continually upon duty: But he doth it not (as I may say) to play the good husband, to encrease his stock by it, but it is for our profit. That which Christ speaks (*Mar.* 2. 27.) about the Sabboth, is true of all other the commands of God, we are apt to think, that God requires a seaventh day, because it is for his profit and advantage; no saith Christ, the Lord hath not an eye to himselfe, but to man; *The Sabboth was made for man*; that is, for mans advantage, that he might look heaven-ward, that he might worke in the things which concern his own blessednesse, therefore hath the Lord appoynted him a resting day. *The Sabboth was made for man, and not man for the Sabboth.*

Sixtly, Then our disobedience cannot hurt God, our sinnes cannot disadvantage him, impaire his blessednesse, or diminish his glory. As mans obedience is no profit, so his disobedience is no disprofit to God. Sinners shall be punished, as they who have wronged and dishonoured God, they shall be dealt with as such: But really, all the sinnes of the world do not bring any damage or disadvantage to God; *Elihu* is expresse to this point, in the 35. Chap. of this Booke, *vers.* 6, 7. *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him?* (Every sin is against the minde of God, but no sinne is against the happinesse of God) *or if thy transgressions be multiplyed, what dost thou unto him?* Is God impair'd by it; Surely no, God doth not loose a pinn from his sleeve (as I may say) by all the sinnes committed in the

the world; He hath no dependance at all upon our obedience for his blessednesse: our sins cannot hurt him, as our obedience cannot help him, which *Elihu* shewes in the next verse; *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?*

Seventhly, hence see the honour of God, that hath made so many creatures, and man especially of whom himselfe hath no need, that hath so many to serve him, and yet needs none of their services. Give God this glory: We thinke those men are very glorious and honourable who have but as much of the Creature as will serve their turn, all creatures are the Lords, yet he is not necessitated to serve his turn by any of them.

Eightly, then, see what an obligation lyeth upon us continually to blesse God, to be thankfull to him, to walke humbly with him, who gives us so many profits, when as we doe not profit him at all. God prizeth that highly by which himselfe hath no benefit; he prizes the actings of faith and holinesse highly, but he hath no advantage by them: God gives us profit by these, though himselfe be not profited, though he is not the better by any thing we doe, yet we are the better; The Lord binds himself by promise, that the lest good we doe in sincerity shall have a good reward; *He that gives but a cup of cold Water to a Disciple in the name of a Disciple, shall not lose his reward.* But if we give thousands of Gold and Silver to poor Disciples, what profit hath God by it? And yet though none of the profit comes to his hand, yet he reckons it as if all were put into his hand. All the charity and compassion shewed to his people, Christ taketh to himselfe (*Matth.* 25.) *In that yee have done it unto these, yee have done it unto me.* Christ had no need of alms, of visiting or cloathing, yet he counts it as done to himselfe, when we doe it to any of his.

Can a man be profitable to God? as he that is wise may be profitable to himselfe?

Some give the meaning of the words thus: Doth it follow, that a man can be profitable unto God, because a wise man may be profitable to himselfe? our reading reaches the same sense. *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himselfe?* It doth not follow, because *A man may profit*

profit another man, or profit himselfe, that therefore he may profit God. That's the summe of the argument.

As he that is wise.

The word in the root of it signifies to understand, to be Prudent; and by a Metonymie to be happy, or to prosper, because usually affaires succeed well and prosper in the hands of wise men; and happinesse usually followes wisdome; therefore to be wise, and to be profitable, are signified by one and the same word in the Hebrew. So in this Text, *He that is wise is profitable to himselfe*, that is, his affaires shall prosper. We find this Title prefixt to divers Psalms, *Maschil* which is as much as *A teaching Psalm, a Psalme making wise, a Psalm for Instruction.* This Title is given those Psalms, which as they have some extraordinary matter, so usually they are Psalms of complaint under affliction; and the reason of that is, because there is much instruction in correction, much light of holy knowledge is to be had in the Schoole of the Crosse: therefore usually those Psalms that describe the afflictions of the Church, are called *Maschil, Psalms of Instruction.*

He that is wise, and instructs: or he that is wise as having received instruction may be profitable to himselfe. All wisdome is not profitable to man, for there is a wisdome of which the Scripture saith, that *God will destroy it*; a man cannot profit himselfe by that; and there is a wisdome which is *earthly, sensuall and divilish*, (Jam. 3. 15.) A man (be he never so wise according to this wisedome) shall not profit himselfe by it. There are a sort of wise men *whom the Lord will take in their craftinesse* (1 Cor. 3. 19.) and how can such profit themselves by their wisdome? There are wise men whose thoughts *the Lord knoweth to be but vain*, that is, unprofitable, therefore these cannot profit themselves: Then what is that wisdom which *Eliphaz* means when he saith, *He that is wise may be profitable to himselfe?*

I answer, The wise man here intended is not the man that is politickly wise, worldly wise, carnally or craftily wise, but the man spiritually wise, his wisdome will bring him in profit. He that is guided by holy and godly wisdome, shall reap the benefit and eat the fruit of it. We have such wisdome descri-

עיבל

Intellexit prudens fuit, per Metonymiam felix prosper fuit quod prudentibus omnia feliciter cedant; prudentiam felicitas fere sequitur.

Maschil, intelligens prudens, carmen erudiens ode didascalica In titulis Psalmorum ter & decies legitur.

Schola crucis, Schola lucis. Luth.

described (*Psal.* 111. 10.) *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdome, a good understanding have all they that keep his Commandements*; he doth not say, a good understanding have all they that know his Commandements, for many may know the Commandements, and yet not have a good understanding; but they have a good understanding indeed that doe his Commandements. And when the Psalmist saith, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdome*, the word *Beginning* signifies not only the first step or entrance into a thing, but the *head* or height of it; so that *Beginning* is as much as *chiefe*, or *principall*, the best wisdome, the chiefe, the top wisdome, the head wisdome, or the head of wisdom, is the fear of the Lord. *Job* gives the same description of wisdome, in the last words of the twenty-eighth Chapter, *Behold the fear of the Lord that is wisdome, and to depart from evill that is understanding.* Would you know what is true wisdome, 'tis the fear of the Lord: would you know who is wise? The godly man is the truly wise man, yea he is the only wise man.

But then it may be questioned, *May a wise man be profitable to himselfe?* Doth not the Apostle say (*Rom.* 14. 7.) *None of us liveth to himselfe*, &c. Then how can a man be wise to himselfe? And doth not the Apostle give the rule (2 *Cor.* 5. 15.) *Christ dyed for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves*: If we may not live to our selves, how then doth he say here, that the wise man is profitable to himselfe? He that is profitable to himself, lives to himselfe, doth he not?

I answer, First, the wise man must not make his own profit the end or the designe of his wisdome, but he may looke upon his own profit as that which will be the issue, fruit, and consequent of his wisdome. A carnall man looks to and loves his worke for the rewards sake: A godly man may look to and love his reward for the worke sake. (*Prov.* 9. 12.) *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thy selfe*, that is, the fruit or the good of thy wisdome will drop into thy own bosom. *A wise man may looke for his advantage in the end of his worke, though he is not to make his own advantage the end of his worke.* We are not to make either temporall or eternall advantages, the end of our wisdome; but we may look upon them as fruits and effects that God leads us to by the exercise of wisdome.

Secondly,

Secondly, I answer, a wise man cannot be profitable to himselfe as the founder of his own happinesse; or as having a sufficiency in himselfe to make himselfe happy; but a wise man may be a meanes or an instrument of his own happinesse, and walking in the way of wisdome, he walks in the way to his own happinesse. Thus he that is Godly wise, or that feareth God, may may be profitable to himselfe.

Hence Observe,

He that is truly wise, godly and holy, shall find fruit and benefit by it.

The Apostle (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) assureth us that *Godlinesse is profitable for all things*. The greatest gain in the world is Godlinesse, *It hath the promises of this life and of that which is to come.* Whatsoever drops out of any promise of the Gospel, falls into the lap of a godly man; the promises are his, and therefore the good of the promise is his. When the promises open at any time, and give forth their vertue, they must need give it forth to him that is wise, to him that is godly, for godlinesse hath the promises. When the Apostle had rebuk'd a sort of men that made godlinesse only a stalking-horse to get gaine, he presently adds, *But godlinesse is great gaine, if a man be content with what he hath.* Godlinesse it selfe is great gaine, if we have no more, but godlinesse bring in gaine, abundance of gaine, besides it selfe. (*Matt.* 6 35.) *Seek first the Kingdome of God, and the righteousnesse thereof, and all these things shall be added* (or cast in as an advantage) *to you.* The Apostle (*Rom.* 6. 21.) puts a kinde of holy scorn upon sinners, come, tell me, *What fruit had you of those things whereof you are now ashamed?* What fruit have you by your folly, pride, worldlinesse, envy, what fruit have you found in these things? Bring me in an account of your gaine by traiding in any sin. *The end of these things is death*; there is no great profit in that. *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holinesse, and the end everlasting life.* Here are fruits good store, and all good fruits both for here and hereafter. We can never want fruit our selves, while we are bringing forth fruit unto God: All obedience is attended with a blessing, and though as was toucht before, we cannot be the founders of our own blessednesse, nor must we meerly designe our own happinesse, or aime

at our own profit (for that is mercenary ſervice) yet we may look at our own happineſſe and profit, yea and *Lay up for our ſelves a good foundation*, as *Paul* adviſeth rich men (*1 Tim.6.19.*) We then make the beſt of our riches, when we lay up for our ſelves a good foundation. But can a man lay a foundation of his happineſſe in his riches? what a rotten foundation will that be? what hay and ſtubble (in this ſenſe) will gold and ſilver be? What's the meaning of it then when the Apoſtle ſaith, *Laying up for your ſelves a good foundation?*

I anſwer, we doe it by the right improvement of riches (for he ſpeaks there to rich men) not that we can lay any foundation to build upon beſide Jeſus Chriſt, for other foundation can no man lay then that which is laid, even *Jeſus Chriſt*; but when our hearts are not glued to the creature, but we uſe them in a holy manner, here's our laying up a good foundation. A godly wiſe man may looke upon his right improvement of worldly riches, as an effect of the grace and love of Chriſt dwelling in his heart; and thus he may be ſaid to lay up for himſelfe a good foundation. And further, a beleever may looke upon his worldly profits as a fruit of the ſame grace, the Lord having promiſed that he will bleſſe and provide for him, ſo that every way a wiſe man may be profitable to himſelfe. Thus *Eliphaz* hath at once aſſerted a poſſibility for a man to be profitable to himſelfe, and denyed any poſſibility that a man can be profitable unto God, which he further explaines in the next words.

Verſ. 3. *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it any gaine to him that thou makeſt thy way perfect?*

In the former Verſe *Eliphaz* denyed in generall that God receiveth any benefit from man: In this third verſe he ſpeakes the ſame thing, but ſomewhat more diſtinctly, denying firſt that he receives any pleaſure which might add to his bleſſedneſſe, or ſecondly any gaine which might add to his abundance. *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Is it any gaine to him, that thou makeſt thy way perfect?* As if he had ſaid, *Is the bleſſedneſſe of God encreaſed by thy righteouſneſſe? Or*

Or doth the perfection of thy wayes augment his Treaſure? Is he either the happier or the richer by any thing thou art or canſt doe? That's the ſcope and ſence of the words in generall.

Is it any pleaſure?

The word which we tranſlate *Pleaſure*, ſignifies the *will*, and becauſe it is ſo great a pleaſure unto man to have his will, therefore the ſame word ſignifieth both pleaſure and the will. So the word is uſed (*Pſal. 1.2.*) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe delight is in the Law of God*; that is, whoſe will is there, or who takes pleaſure in the law of God, his will being reſolved into the will of God. Then we take pleaſure and delight in a thing when we conforme to it, or cloſe with it. The Judgement of God is ſo expreſſed upon *Coniah* (*Jer. 22.28.*) *Is this man Coniah a deſpiſed broken Idol? Is he a veſſell wherein there is no pleaſure?* A veſſell for the loweſt uſe, as 'tis interpreted, *ver. 21.* A veſſel in which there is no complacency, it is only for neceſſity. So the word is taken alſo (*Prov. 3.15.*) *He is more precious then Rubies, all the things thou canſt deſire* (or have pleaſure in) *are not to be compared to him.* And againe, (*Iſa. 58.13.*) *If thou forbeare to doe thy pleaſure upon mine holy day*: What is the pleaſure of a carnal man upon the Sabboth, upon the holy day of God? It is to doe his own will, and not the will of God. *If thou forbear to doe thine own pleaſure*, that is, thine own will upon my holy day. Thus here, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* The Septuagint Tranſlate ſomewhat differently, *What cares the Almighty if thou art unblameable in thy wayes?* Thus a man uſually ſpeakes of that wherein he hath no pleaſure, *What care I for it? Is it any pleaſure, &c*

יפה Notat voluntatem cum complacentia, vel acquieſcentia.

Vas in quo non eſt voluntas.

τί γὰρ μέλει τῷ κυρίῳ, &c. Sept.

That thou art righteous:

Righteouſneſſe is twofold: Firſt of Juſtification (ſo ſome underſtand it here) *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art juſtified?* Or ſecondly there is a righteouſneſs in Converſation, ſo moſt underſtand it here; *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art holy?* Which is the ſame with the latter clauſe of the Text, *That thou makeſt thy way perfect.*

Further, the word ſignifies to plead our own juſtice, as well as to have a juſtice or righteouſneſſe of our own: And thus it

An oblectationi est omnipotenti quod justificas te? Jun.

Se justificare non tam est justum esse quam contendere & conari adversus calumnias & scelera sibi objecta & ex ratione coram judice respondere.

may be expounded in this place. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous*, that is, that *Thou dost justifie thy selfe* or (as Mr. *Broughton*) *pleadest justice*. Dost thou justifie thy self, or stand upon thine own integrity, and then think to please God, or to carry the day against man, upon those tearmes? *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty?* That word fully hits the design of *Eliphaz*, it signifies both *Almighty* and *All-sufficient*, one that hath all in his own compasse, that needs not goe out of himselfe to fetch in any supplies or aid from abroad. He is self sufficient, and he hath a sufficiency for all others. *Is it any pleasure to this Almighty one, that thou dost thus justifie thy selfe?*

Or is it any gaine to him that thou makest thy way perfect?

As it is *no pleasure*, so *no gaine*. The second Verse before opened clears the minde of this clause. What there he calleth *profit* is here called *gaine*, in different words: And the word here used is rendred indifferently both gaine and profit. (*Gen.* 37. 26.) When *Joseph* was cast into the pit, *Judah* said, *What profit is it to slay our brother; let us sell him*; let us make gaine of him that way, slaying him will be no profit to us. And as it signifies gain, so covetousnesse, and the reason is because covetousnes hath gain for its object, covetousness provokes men to seek gain. *Jethro* (*Exod.* 18. 21.) gives counsel that Magistrates should be *Men fearing God and hating Covetousness*, or hating *gain* that is not only all covetous practices, but inordinate desires of gaine, for these lead into unlawfull wayes of gaine, even to the perverting of Justice.

Is it any gain to him that thou makest [*thy way*] *perfect?* That is, thy life thy conversation, thy course; what though thou strivest after the highest attainments of grace, the purest purity of life, is this any gaine to the Lord? The Septuagint render, *That thou makest thy way simple*. The simple, sincere, plaine way is the perfect way. The perfection of our way is the simplicity, sincerity, and uprightnesse of it.

Another reads, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thy way is undefiled*, Or cleane, that thou doest sweep and wash thy way, so that there is no spot to be seene upon it. (*Psal.* 119. 1.) *Blessed are the undefiled or perfect in the way*. The severall parts

Alphabetarius est hic Psalmus, ostendens parvulos ab ipsis statim elementis & pueritia infarmandos esse ad pietatem. Hilar.

parts of this Psalm begin with a new Letter, according to the order of the Hebrew Alphabet, intimating that it ought to be learned even of Children, as one of the Ancients infers from it. The undefiled in the way are such (properly) as have been holy or pure from their youth, such as did never corrupt their wayes. *Timothy* is said *from a Child to learn the Scriptures*. Suppose thy way thus perfect, that none could tax thee with any grosse sin, even from thy Child-hood, could this be any gain to the Almighty?

Aut an lucro quod integras asseris vias tuas. Jun.

There is yet another Translation, which implyeth not only the study of holinesse, but a boasting in holinesse, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou dost justifie thy selfe? Or is it any gaine to him that thou dost affirme thy wayes are perfect?* So it fals in with the third rendring of the former clause.

For the understanding and further clearing of these words, I shall draw them forth into distinct propositions, which will be as so many observations from the Text. It may seeme a very Paradox to assert that it is no pleasure to the Almighty that a man makes his way perfect, therefoee take the sense first in three affirmative Propositions, and then in three that are Negative.

First, *The Lord hath pleasure in us as we are righteous in Christ*. Yea he loves to hear us boast of this righteousnesse, and glory in it; and the more we doe so; the more pleasure he taketh in it. (*Isa.* 45. 25.) *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousnesse, even to him shall men come* &c. *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory*. The seed of *Israel* are righteous in the Lord, and glory in that righteousnesse; yea the Lord is pleased to heare them glorying in that righteousnesse, for that's the righteousnesse of his Son, *in whom he is well pleased*, (Mat. 3. 17.) And because the Church is cloathed with this righteousnesse, therefore she is called *The Lords delight*, (*Isa.* 62. 4.) *Thou shalt no more be called forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate, but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, & thy land Beulah, for the Lord delighteth in thee*. Thou shalt be called *my delight, or my pleasure is in her*. The word of the Text, the Lords pleasure is in the Church, and therefore the Lords pleasure is in the Church, because the Church is adorned and beautified with the righteousnesse of Jesus Christ; this is it.

it which cauſeth the Lord to call his Church *Hephzibah*, *My pleaſure is in her.* When *Eliphaz* enquireth, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* We may anſwer, the Lord hath pleaſure in this righteouſneſſe, and as he tells the Church, ſo every particular Believer, his delight and pleaſure is in him.

Secondly, *God takes pleaſure alſo in us as we are righteous in Converſation.* *David* (Pſal. 147. 10, 11.) gives a clear proofe of it both in the negative and in the affirmative. *The Lord delighteth not in the ſtrength of a Horſe, he taketh not pleaſure in the leggs of a man.* The Lords delight is neither in Horſes nor in men, neither in their ſtrength, nor in their beauty: wherein is the Lords pleaſure then? The next words ſhew us where, *He takes pleaſure in them that feare him and hope in his mercy.* This Scripture ſeemes to ſpeake directly contrary to *Eliphaz* in *Job*, he ſaith, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* But *David* ſaith, *The Lord takes pleaſure in thoſe that feare him*; therefore we muſt not underſtand *Eliphaz* in this ſenſe, as if the Lord had no delight or contentment at all in the holineſſe of his people, as if it were all one to him whether they are holy or unholy: There is a Generation who ſay, that all actions are alike, and that it is all one before God, whether men be righteous or unrighteous, whether they doe good or evill: woe to them that underſtand this Scripture in ſuch a corrupt ſenſe, for the Lord doth not only hate iniquity, but he is *Of purer eyes then to behold any iniquity.* He hath no pleaſure either in unrighteouſnes, or in the unrighteous, but both righteouſneſſe and the righteous are his pleaſure. There are three things which I ſhall touch for the confirmation of it.

Firſt, the Lord cannot but take pleaſure in his own Image: Now that righteouſneſſe which is implanted in us, and put forth by us, the righteouſneſſe of our natures and of our actions, as we are regenerate, is nothing elſe but the Image of God renewed upon us. Seeing then God cannot but take pleaſure in his own Image, therefore it is a wickedneſſe to thinke that God takes no pleaſure in a righteous man or in his righteouſneſſe.

Secondly, as this righteouſneſſe is the Image of God in us, ſo it is the very workmanſhip of God upon us (*Epheſ.* 2. 10.) *For*

For we are his workmanſhip; we are ſo not only firſt in our naturall capacity, as we are men, and ſecondly in our civill capacity as ſuch or ſuch men, high or low, rich or poore, but alſo (which is the thing intended by the Apoſtle) in our ſpirituall capacity as Saints. Thus we are *the workmanſhip of God, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we ſhould walke in them.* The ſame Apoſtle ſaith againe, *He that hath wrought us for this ſelfe ſame thing is God*, (2 Cor. 5. 5) Is it poſſible that God ſhould have no pleaſure in his own workes? We read in the firſt of *Geneſis*, that when he had made the world, the Lord *ſaw all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* God hath an All-ſeeing eye, he alwayes beholdeth all things, but when 'tis ſaid, he ſaw all that he had made, this imports a ſpeciall act of God, after the manner of men, who ſtrictly view and behold what they have done, delighting in it; Thus the Lord ſaw all that he had made, he (as it were) came to view his own worke, he ſaw and behold it was very good, he tooke pleaſure in it. Now if God tooke pleaſure in that ſtructure and fabricke of the world, the firſt creation, how much more pleaſure doth he take in that holineſſe which he hath wrought in the hearts of his people, which is a ſecond creation? and that's a more curious and noble ſtructure then this viſible world is. *The new Creation is more excellent then the Old.* Therefore the Lord cannot but delight in a righteous perſon for he is his workmanſhip. What *Job* (*Ch.* 14. 15.) aſſures himſelfe of, is moſt true in this reſpect. *Thou wilt have a deſire to the worke of thine hands* *Job* ſpeaks there of his outward man: my body (he meanes) was made by thee, 'tis the work of thy hands and thou wilt fetch it back again, thou wilt redeeme it from the duſt. Whatſoever hath the workmanſhip of God upon it, he hath pleaſure in it as it is his work, and a ſpeciall pleaſure in that, which (as any worke of Grace is) is his ſpeciall worke.

Thirdly, this Conſideration ſhews that the Lord muſt take pleaſure in a righteous perſon, becauſe he bears the forme of his will revealed in his world. Holineſſe is our conformity to the will of God: Now the Lord cannot but take pleaſure in thoſe who conforme to his will. *Samuel* tels *Saul* (1 Sam. 15. 22. and there he uſeth this word in the Text) *Hath the Lord*

as

as great delight in Burnt offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voyce of the Lord? God gave thee a word, a Command, to which he expected thy conformity, but thou hast thought to please the Lord with Sacrifices, which he commanded thee not, this was thy mistake and thy folly. We honour God when we doe his will, surely then he must needs take pleasure in those that doe it. Man takes pleasure when he can have his will (though it be a corrupt and sinfull will) fulfilled: It cannot but be a pleasure to God when his holy will is fulfilled, or done on earth as it is in heaven. Thus we see the second Proposition cleared, for the understanding of these words, That as the Lord takes pleasure in those who are righteous by the imputed righteousnesse of his Son, so even in those also who are righteous by the Implanted righteousnesse or holinesse of his spirit.

Thirdly, *God takes pleasure to see a sincere and upright person justifie himselfe, or plead his own justice against all the false accusations and suspitions of men.* The Lord likes it well to heare a man who is falsly accused, to stand up and maintaine his own innocency, yea it is our duty, and we are bound in conscience to maintaine our own innocency. So *David* in the seventh Psalme and in the eighteenth Psalm justified himselfe against *Saul*. And thus *Job* all along in this Booke justified himselfe against the opinion of his friends in this sense God takes pleasure, when we are so righteous in all our dealings, and perfect in all our wayes, that we dare encounter whosoever speakes the contrary, and can wash off all the aspersions which either misguided and mistaken friends, or professed enemies cast upon us. You have now had those three affirmative propositions for the understanding of the Text. Take three more in the Negative.

First, *God hath no pleasure to see us justifie our selves before him, or to plead our own righteousnesse with him, yea he is extreamely displeased at it.* This some conceive the chiefe thing which *Eliphaz* aimed at. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou dost justifie thy selfe?* No, thou dost highly provoke him in doing so, to plead with or to justifie our selves before God that we are righteous, is worse then all our unrighteousnesse, for this overthrowes the whole designe of the Gospell, which is (*1 Cor.* 1.29.)

1.29.) *That no flesh should glory in his presence, but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* And (*Rom.* 3.19, 20.) The Law conviceth all, *That all the world may become guilty before God, therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall be no flesh justified in his sight.* God will have every mouth stopped, or cry guilty, and therefore for any one to open his mouth and justifie himselfe before God, is to overthrow the Gospel. They are *ignorant of the righteousnesse of God, who goe about to establish their own righteousnesse* (Rom. 10. 3.) And as God hath no pleasure in them who boast of their righteousnesse to justifie themselves before him, so

Secondly, *God hath no pleasure in them who boast of their own righteousnesse and contemne others.* Though a man may assert the righteousnesse of his Conversation against all them who question it; yet God resents it highly when any proclaime their own righteousnesse to the despising of others. Christ speakes a Parable against those (in the 18th of *Luke*, v. 9, 10, 11.) who *trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. Two men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican: The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thanke thee that I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Adulterers, Unjust, or even as this Publican* Here was one that advanced his own active righteousnesse, and he did it with the contempt of another. *I am not as this Publican.* The Lord takes no pleasure in this, yea the Lord is highly displeased with this. And (*Isa.* 65. 5.) the prophet represents the Lords indignation against this Pharisaicall spirit in dreadfull eloquence, *Stand by thy selfe, come not near to me, for I am holier then thou.* Thus they pleaded their righteousnesse in contempt of others. *These* (saith the Lord) *are a smoake in my nose* (that is, grievous, and displeasing), *a fire that burneth all the day.*

Thirdly, *God hath no pleasure at all in any of our righteousnesse, either in the righteousnesse of our justification, or the righteousnesse of our Sanctification, as the least addition to his own happinesse.* The reason of it is, because (as was shewed from the former Verse) God is self sufficient, and hath no dependance at all upon the Creature: So that what pleasure soever the Lord hath in the righteousnesse of our Justification, or of our Sanctification, we cannot put it to this account, that we add any thing to his happinesse.

All the pleasure which God taketh is in himselfe, or in the fulfilling of his own good pleasure in Christ.

Deus nullis rebus quæ extra ipsum sunt tangitur aut mutatur.

And therefore the worke which Jesus was to doe on Earth, is called *the pleasure of God.* (Isa. 53. 10.) *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to griefe, when thou shalt make his soule an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his dayes, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* That pleasure of the Lord was the worke which the Lord put into his hand, or which he gave him to doe, even the bringing about his eternall purpose, for the recovery of lost man; that's a worke in which the Lord takes pleasure, so much pleasure, that the Prophet calleth it *His pleasure.* And thus the Apostle speakes (*Eph.* 1. 5, 6.) *Having predistinated us to the Adoption of Children, by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his own will,* &c. The good pleasure of God is only in his own will, that's his pleasure. The Lord delights to see his will accomplisht in the saving of sinners, as well as in the obedience of Saints, that's a part of the good will of God: why doth he take pleasure in the obedience of Saints, even because his own will is done. It's not any thing in us that doth it. So when he saves us, the pleasure which he takes is in the fulfilling of his own will, rather then in our salvation. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?*

Vers.4. *Will he reprove thee for feare of thee? Or will he enter with thee into judgment?*

The Question is to be resolved into this negative, *He will not reprove thee for fear of thee,* &c.

Will he reprove thee?

יכיח *arguit redarguit, convincit, judicat.*

The word signifies first to argue or dispute, and so to convince by the authority of reason.

Secondly, to plead, so to convince by evidence of the Law and fact (*Mich.* 6. 2.) *Hear yee O Mountaines the Lords controversie, and ye strong foundations of the Earth, for the Lord hath a controversie with his people, and he will plead with Israel.* The Mountaines and the strong foundations of the earth, are the great men of the earth, or Magistraticall powers, with these the

the Lord threatens a Controversie, and that he will plead or argue his cause with them.

Thirdly, It signifies to argue or plead not with words onely, but with blowes. to reprove with correction. *Job* 5. 17. *Happy is the man whom thou correctest.* The word which here we render *reprove*, is there rendred to *correct*, which is reproving by blowes.

Fourthly, Some translate it to evidence, *to evince*, and determine: Thus it is said (*Gen.* 20. 16.) that *Abimelech reproved Sarah*, that is, gave evidence that she had a husband: And *Abrahams* Servant said (*Gen.* 24. 44.) She that saith to me, *both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy Camels, let her be the woman whom the Lord hath appointed for my Masters Son.* That is, let this token be an evidence to me, that it is she whom thou hast appoynted for his wife. Some here take it so, *Will God evidence* or determine *concerning thee, by thy fear, or the worship which thou givest him, That thou art righteous.* We expresse it fully enough, *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?*

Or will he enter with thee into judgment?

Both these expressions are of the same sence; and these words [*for fear of thee*] may be read in the close of the Verse, *Will he reprove thee, or will he enter with thee into judgment for fear of thee?*

Feare may be taken here two wayes: Either first Actively, or secondly Passively.

Putasne te pleßi ob religionē tuam.

Take it Actively, and so it notes the fear of *Job*, *Will he reprove thee because of thy fear?* And then by his fear we are to understand his Religiousnesse or holinesse; so Mr. *Broughton*, *Would he reprove thee for thy Religion?*

An de religione tua argueret te? Jun.

Take this Fear Passively, and then it implyeth a Feare which God himselfe might be thought to have of him, as if *Eliphaz* had said, *God is not afraid of thee.* The Prophet saith (*Isa.* 51. 12.) *Who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a man,* &c. Much more may we say, who or what is man that God should be afraid of him? One of the Ancients following this Interpretation, professeth that no fit or comely sense can be given of these words, but concludes that *Eliphaz* spake very foolishly and grosly, or as a man forsaken and left of God: *For* (saith he) *can any one imagine such a thing as this, that* Job *should have a thought*

Quis vel hoc desipiens sentiat, quod Dominus ex timore nos arguat & extra metum judicium suum contra nos proponat. Greg.

that God was afraid of him? But we may very well accommodate the sense in either of these considerations of Fear, whether actively, or passively, and judicious Interpreters carry it both wayes. Let us weigh it a little in both.

Putasne quod ille te affligat, quia religiosus sis & Dei timens ac integer ut de te ipse predicas, minime vero, quin potius quod sis irreligiosus. Merc.

First Actively, as fear is taken for the fear which *Job* feared, that is, for his religion and worship, or the exercise of it, then the meaning is this. *Dost thou thinke that God doth punish thee for thy goodnesse, or because thou art righteous? No, it is because thou art irreligious: Is not thine iniquity great, and thy sin infinite?* As he speaks out in the next words, Dost thou thinke that God punishes thee for thy holinesse? No, he can find sins enow to doe it for. And *Eliphaz* might speake to such a sense (I conceive) because *Job* pleaded his integrity so much, as if he should say. *Never think that God afflicts thee for thy holinesse, or righteousnes, but rather acknowledge thy sins and thy wickednesse to be the cause of thy afflictions, Are not thine iniquities manifest?*

There is a truth in this, *God doth correct many who fear him, but he doth not correct any one for fearing of him; many holy persons are afflicted but no man was ever afflicted for his holines.* God hath made many promises to the godly man, that he will reward him, and doe him good. *Say to the righteous it shall be well with him. Godlines is profitable for all things having the promises of this life, and of that which is to come.* Therefore no man needs feare that God will hurt him for his holinesse: though a holy man may receive many rods and scourges from God, yet holinesse never received the least scourge from God.

Num quid ex timore tuo judicabit te? Deus quando te judicabit, non respiciet ad timorem tuum tantum & connivebit ad mala quæ feceris. Hoc pro subijcit, nonne malum tuum amplum est? ostendit autem nullam

Againe, as fear is taken Actively for Religion, or for holinesse, the sense may be given thus, in pursuance of the fourth signification of the word *Reprove*, before explained, When God comes to judge thee, or when he declares what thou art, he will not looke to thy feare only, to thy profession of Religion, and holinesse, and over-looke or winke at thy sins; and therefore he presently subjoynes, *Is not thy wickednesse great?* Hereby arguing, that no mans piety is so perfect, that thereby he can be accounted just or righteous in the sight of God, or that a mans profession, yea and practice of Religion is of no value, either to escape the punishment of his sin, or to deserve a reward at the hands of God. Some expound that (*Psal.* 50. 8.) in a paralel sense to this, the Original word being the same

same. *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices* (which is the same with *Fear* in the Text, according to this Interpretation, being put for all outward worship or religiousnesse) *or for thy burnt-offerings continually before me*; For those words, *to have been*, which our Translators supply, may be left out, and the sense remain perfect: Or if those words be continued, then the negative particle *not*, is (as in many Scriptures it is) to be reassumed out of the first part of the verse, and the whole read thus, *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices, or for thy burnt-offerings not to have been continually before me.* That is, I will not charge thee with a neglect of outward duty or worship, the inward and spirituall (of which he speakes, *ver.* 14.) being that which is most pleasing unto me. Now as to the paraleling of this place in the Psalmes, with the sence of *Job's* Text now under hand, we must read them thus, *I will not judge thee for thy Sacrifices*, that is, when I determine concerning thy righteousnesse, I will not doe it by having an eye to or respecting thy Sacrifices, thy religious course and exercise of holinesse, though thou hast been much yea even continually conversant in them, I shall only argue and declare thee righteous as thou trustest in me and by faith takest hold of my Covenant. Thus as the Lord is conceived saying in the Psalme, I will not judge or declare thee righteous for thy Sacrifices, so here *Eliphaz, will he* (that is certainly he will not) *judge or declare thee righteous for thy feare?* And so the latter part of the verse may receive the same Exposition, *Will he enter with thee into judgment*, namely *for thy feare?* Will God deale with thee upon the account of thy piety? And when he comes to justifie thee, will he impute that to thee? Or when God enters into judgement with thee, will he suffer thee to present thy feare, thy piety, or goodnesse to him, and so thereby answer his plea, or take away the action which he brings against thee? When God enters with us into judgment, we may boldly plead our interest or Faith in the Mediator, but we must not plead our feare, the Grace or Holinesse either of our persons, or of our services.

pietatem hominis esse perfectam, ut inde justus judicari deo possit. Coc.

Eliphaz propositum est ostendere quod religio hominis non prosit ad demerendum deum, vel peccati pœnam evadendam. Coc.

Thus we see the Doctrine of the Text according to this Exposition, and the active signification of the word *Feare*, carrieth in it the very life and spirit of the Gospel. All the worth and

and merit of our works as to righteouſneſſe, is nul'd and laid proſtrate, and we taught to glory in nothing but the free gift and grace of God by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, As *Fear* is taken paſſively, *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?* That is, is God afraid of thee, doth he picke quarrels with thee for feare of thee? Or ſeeke occaſions againſt thee when there is none? only leſt thou ſhouldeſt ſtand in his way, or be a detriment to him. This appears plainly to be the ſenſe of our Tranſlators.

Whence Obſerve,

God is above the feare of the Creature.

As in the former verſe God is above any advantages or hopes that the Creature can give him, ſo he is above the feare of any hurt that the Creature can doe him. As the goodneſſe or righteouſneſſe of man cannot benefit the Lord, ſo the wickedneſs and ſinfulneſſe of man cannot at all impaire the eternall glory and happineſſe of the Lord. Though the wickedneſſe of man be a darkening to the manifeſtations of his glory (and for that wicked men ſhall be judged) yet as to his eſſentiall glory all the wickedneſſe in the world cannot darken that, nor be the leaſt abatement to it. *Will he reprove thee for feare of thee?* No, man cannot hurt the Lord by all his wickedneſſe, and therefore

The puniſhment which God layeth upon wicked men is not after the manner of men. God doth not puniſh as man puniſheth.

Eliphaz here ſpeaks of that which is often indeed a true ground among men why they reprove or puniſh other men. Some reprove others upon a vaine fear of them, and ſome upon a juſt feare of them. Why did the *Jews* accuſe and reprove Chriſt? Was it not for fear of him? at leaſt they pretended a feare, why elſe were they ſo haſty to have Jeſus Chriſt brought to judgement? (*John* 12. 47, 48.) *Then Gathered the Chiefe Prieſts and Phariſees a Councel, and ſaid, what doe we? for this man doth many Miracles, if we let him thus alone, all men will beleeve on him, and the Romanes ſhall come and take away both our place and Nation.* They Crucifyed Chriſt for fear (though it was but a vaine feare) that he would be the ruine of their ſtate; the *Romanes* muſt needs come and deſtroy them, if they let him alone.

Fear

Feare makes men cruell, and they are moſt ready to hurt others, who continually ſuſpect hurt from others. It hath been an ancient Obſervation, that *Cowards are murtherous and revengefull*, while a man feares that ſuch a man will be his ruine, he ruines him if he can, and removes that out of his way which he ſuppoſeth ſtanding in the way of his own ſafety. Why did *Pharoah* give command to ſlay the Male-Children of the *Jewes*, and oppreſſe that people? It was upon a vaine or cowardly fear, (*come let us deale wiſely with them, leaſt they multiply, and it come to paſſe that when there falleth out any warre, they joyne alſo with our enemies, and fight againſt us, and ſo get them up out of the Land*, (Exod. 1. 10.) It is ſaid at the 7th verſe of that Chap. that *the Children of Iſrael were fruitfull and* (God fulfilling herein his promiſe made to *Abraham*) *encreaſed abundantly, and multiplyed and waxed exceeding mighty, and the Land was filled with them.* When God thus caſt a gracious eye upon them, *Pharoah* and his Councellers caſt a jealous eye upon them; and began to ſuſpect their multiplying might at laſt diminiſh him, that there riſing might prove his ruine. Therefore upon *reaſon of ſtate* he muſt find out a way to ſuppreſſe and keepe them under as ſlaves and bondmen, whom his Anceſtors received as welcome gueſts, and had to that day, enjoyed as faithfull friends. *Pharoah* being captivated with this feare, ſaw no way to free himſelfe, but by taking away the freedome of that whole people. As ſome through the prevalency of their own feares dare not doe juſtice, ſo others through the prevalency of feare doe that which is unjuſt. Take one inſtance more, why did *Herod* (*Matth.* 2.) ſend out to ſlay all the Children? It was for feare of the King of the *Jewes*, he was afraid of Chriſt, and therefore that he might murther him, he have that horrible ſentence to ſlay all the Infants. Again, ſome reprove and judge upon a due feare, for as Tyrants and wicked men are full of fear becauſe full of cruelty, and have ſuſpitious thoughts that others will wrong them, becauſe they have a minde to wrong every man: ſo juſt and righteous Magiſtrates when they ſee evill working, they muſt reprove and puniſh it leſt it ſpread to the endangering of the publick Peace. This is a juſt feare, and ſuch as become a man, even a man of courage and integrity;

ſuch

Veriss mum est illud, quod inter argumentandum assumit Eliphaz, ex timore frequenter nasci aut vehementius accendi solere severitatem in irrogando supplicio. Pined.

such may fear that if seditious spirits be let alone, they will undermine a whole Nation, and destroy thousands. A Magistrate reproves and Judges Theeves and Murtherers out of fear that if they encrease no man shall live quietly. Such as either openly or secretly contrive evill against a Nation, the Magistrate from a just ground of fear deals with them and reproves lest they should disturbe or infect the whole.

But the Lord doth not reprove any man for fear of him, he is of such infinite strength and stability, so far out of the reach of all the plots and contrivances of the wicked, that he needs not call them to account lest they should hurt his state, pull him out of his Throne, spoyle his Kingdome, or get his Dominion from him; the Lord is not afraid of any of these things, but the true reason why the Lord reproves wicked men, is, because he hates their iniquities, and is a God of truth and judgment. Though Magistrates may punish not only out of the love of Righteousnes and Judgment, but because they feare a state may be ruin'd if they doe it not, yet the Lord hath none of this feare, in regard of his State, but he doth it meerly out of love to justice, and as a hater of wickednesse.

He reproves man because he hath sinned against him, not because he is afraid of him, as *Eliphaz* shewes in the words which follow.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 22. Vers. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Is not thy wickednesse great, and thine inquity infinite?
For thou hast taken a pledge of thy Brother for nought, & stripped the naked of their cloathing.
Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, & thou hast with holden bread from the hungry.
But as for the mighty man he had the earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it.
Thou hast sent widdowes away empty, and the arms of the fatherlesse have been broken.

IN this Context *Eliphaz* intends to shew the true reason why God reproved *Job*, and entred into udgement with him, it was not (as was said at the 4th Verse) either because God was afraid of him, or because he feared God, but it was for his wickednesse, as *Eliphaz* (though mistaken) concluded against him; as if he had said, *God doth not punish thee because he is afraid of thee, but because he loveth justice, and hateth iniquity: Is not thy wickednesse great, and thine iniquity infinite?* That's the scope of these words, which we may fitly call *Job's Indictment*, and this Indictment is laid down first in generall words, *vers.* 5. *Is not thy wickednesse great, and thine iniquity infinite?* And here *Job* is not charged with wickednesse and iniquity barely, but under a two-fold aggravation.

1. *Great:*
2. *Infinite.*

Secondly, We have his Indictment drawn out into particular Charges, or a specification of some notorious sins given against him in the Verses following.

This particular Charge consists of two heads.

First, Sinnes against man; Secondly, Sinnes against God; His supposed sinnes against man, contained in the words now read, are of two sorts; First, Sinnes of commission, or of the evill which he had done; Secondly, sins of omission, or of the good that he had not done. The evill which he chargeth him

him to have done, is twofold; first an act of injustice, *taking a pledge*, in the sixt verse; secondly, an act of uncharitablenesse, *stripping the naked*, in the same verse.

Both which evills, or miscarriages towards the honest poore are aggravated (*ver.* 8.) by his undue connivence at the wicked rich; as he was too severe against the poore, so he was over-favourable towards the great, and mighty; *But as for the mighty man he had the earth, and the honourable man he dwelt in it*; as if he had said; *Thou didst never set thy selfe to doe justice upon the great ones, be they and do they what they will, they have the earth, thou didst never put forth or exercise thy power to suppresse and oppose their insolencies, thy edge was turned only against inferior ones; Thou tookest a pledge from the poore, and hast stripped the naked of their cloathing.*

His sinnes of omission are expressed in the 7th. verse: *Thou hast not given water to the weary, thou hast withholden bread from the hungry*; and in the 9th. verse, *Thou hast sent widdowes away empty, and the arms of the fatherlesse have been broken*: Which may be either taken thus; Thou hast broken their armes, or thou hast not given thy helpe, and assistance to restore, and relieve them when broken. Thus we have a light into the meaning of these five verses, as they are a charge of sinne upon *Job*.

Vers. 5. *Is not thy wickednesse great?*

The question may be taken two wayes; either conjecturally, and doubtingly, or assertively, and affirmingly. Usually in Scripture such questions are resolved into assertions, and so divers Interpreters resolve this here; *Is not thy wickednesse great?* That is, I conclude against thee, *that thy wickednesse is great, and that thy iniquities are infinite*; so Mr. *Broughton* renders; *Doubtlesse thy evill is great.* Others conceive it more cleare to the mind of the Text, that this question should be interpreted conjecturally; *Is not thy wickednesse great?* That is, may we not suppose, that thy wickednesse is great? may we not from (at least) probable grounds think thus of thee? And that, First, from the generall state of man by nature, mans heart being sinfull he may sinne, and sinne (as it were) without bounds, greatly. *There is no man* (saith *Solomon*, 1 Kings 8. 46.) *that liveth, and sinneth not*; *Solomon* puts it as a parenthesis in his prayer, but it is such a parenthesis, as hooks in all mankinde, it takes all in, *Who is there that sinneth not?* so (*Prov.* 20. 9.) *Who can say I am clean from my sinne?* Now upon this generall ground *Eliphaz* might suppose, *Is not thy wickednesse great?* All men have this in their nature, and hast not thou made, improvement of it in thy life? All men being sinfull by nature art not thou extreamly sinfull in practise?

Non tam hæc ei ex professo obiicit, quam cogitandum ei relinquit, num hæc fecerit. Merc.

Againe, He might make the supposition upon this ground, his present condition, or his affliction: thou art greatly afflicted, thy afflictions are not of an ordinary size, or measure, therefore is not thy wickednesse great? and thine iniquity beyond the ordinary measure? Upon this common rule he might suppose his sin very great; for usually God doth proportion, and measure out punishments by our sinnes. Thy sufferings are very great, therefore are not thy sins great too? Thus he might speake conjecturally upon both these considerations; And yet if we consider how positively he speaks of particulars at the 6. and 7th. verses, &c: *Thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their cloathing*, &c. He gives us but to much ground to thinke, that he did more than barely conjecture, while he sayd;

Is not thy wickednesse great?

The word which we render *wickednesse*, is by some specially expounded of that wickednesse which hath a kinde of impudence in it, and which doth not onely break, transgresse, or step over the Law, but spurns against it; every man that sinneth steppeth over the Law, over the line, but there are some that kicke at it, some who trample upon it, yea they would destroy it; so some highten the emphasis of the word.

רעתך *malum tuũ vox Hebræa pertinet ad improbitatẽ quandam & impudentiam, contra jus & æquum omnia conculcantem.*

Againe, the word is rendred by others as signifying the evill of punishment in this part of the verse, and not the evill of sin; *Is not thy affliction great, therefore thy iniquity is infinite.* The Greek word (*Matth.* 6. 34.) answers this, *Sufficient to the day is the evill thereof*, that is, the trouble, and the sorrow of it: (*Amos* 3. 6.) *Is there any evill in the City which the Lord hath not done?* So here, *Is not thy evill great*, thy evill of punishment? therefore thy iniquity is infinite. But I rather fix it upon the former,

Malitia in sacris interdũ est afflictio, scrumna vexatio, pro malo pœnæ non culpæ accipit. Rab. Lev.

former: though the word sometimes signifies the evill of affliction, yet here I shall take it for the evill of sin, or as we translate, *wickednesse*, which denotes not ordinary but great sin; for though every wicked man be a sinner, yet every sinner is not properly a wicked man.

Further, wickednesse in the former, and iniquity in the latter part of the verse, may be thus distinguished; *wickednesse* specially respects those acts by which we hurt, and wrong others, *iniquity* those in which we passe by or neglect the duty which we owe to others; and therefore *Eliphaz* calls his wickednesse *great*, but his iniquities *infinite*; because sins of omission are more in number then sins of commission; Man fayles oftner by not doing the good required, then by doing the evil forbidden. Nature can easier forbeare that which it likes, or pleaseth it, then be conversant in that which it likes not, or with which it is displeased.

Malitiam dicit plurimam, sed iniquitates infinitas, quia in pluribus peccat homo omittendo quam committendo. Aquin.

Is not thy wickednesse great?

The word signifies both magnitude and multitude, and it may be taken both wayes here, for great in bulk, and great in number.

But it may be said, whose wickednesse is not great? or is any sinne little? Why then doth *Eliphaz* fasten this upon *Job*, *Is not thy wickednes great?*

I answer, first, that it is unbecoming any man, to say his sins, are little; we should not little, or lessen our sinnes, or have low thoughts of them: as we ought not to have low thoughts of any of the mercies of God, but to think them all great to us, yea too great for us, so we should not have light thoughts of any of our sins, but judge the least of them great, and the lightest of them heavy, yea even too great and too heavy for us to beare. Nor doth any thing more greaten a mans sin, then his opinion that it is little.

Secondly, I answer, that indeed no sinne is little: in the least sinne that ever was committed, there is a greatnesse, as committed against the great God, as it is a breach of the Law, and an abuse of the love of the Great God. Nevertheless, though every sinne, thus considered, is great yet comparatively some sinnes are but little, and sinnes being weighed one with

with the other, we may give this distinction of them into little and great, light and heavy. And as some Godly men are faithfull and feare God above many, so some wicked men are sinfull and dishonour God above many. *Is not thy wickednesse great?*

Hence note:

It is our duty not only to take notice of our sins, but of the greatnesse and degree of our sins.

Eliphaz doth well to put *Job* upon that inquiry, *Is not thy wickednesse Great?* Though he did ill so groundlesly to suspect, much more to conclude that it was so. When *Moses* (*Exod.* 32. 31.) interceded for the people, after they had made the Golden Calfe, he makes report of their sinne to God in the fullest aggravation of it; *O, this people have sinned a great sinne, and have made them Gods of Gold*; he doth not only confesse in their behalfe, that they had sinned, but they had sinned greatly, *They have* (saith he) *sinned a sin*, that's more then to doe a thing that is sinfull, and which is yet more, They have *sinned a great sin*, and which is most of all, *they* (though they have been taught and have professed that God made them) *have made them Gods of Gold. David* makes this the ground why he did beg pardon of his sin (*Psal.* 25. 11) *Pardon mine iniquity for it is great*, As we are to look upon the greatnesse of sinne, to humble our soules with godly sorrow, so we are to look upon the greatnesse of sinne when we sue to the Lord for pardon; pardon my sinne for it is great, our very sensiblenesse that our sinne is great, is a prevailing argument with God to pardon it; and our insensiblenesse that our sinnes are great, gives the greatest stop to the pardon of them. And as every sinne hath the more need of pardon, by how much the greater it is, so God will have the more glory in pardoning it, by how much the greater it is. The great wounds, and sicknesses of the Patient have the more need of curing, and if a Physician cure a great wound or sicknesse, he hath the more honour by the cure. Now that we may take the truest measure of our sinnes, we must looke upon them, first in their nature and kinde, of what sort they are, and to what they relate in their commission; secondly, in their circumstances, when, how, and in

what

what manner they have been committed. That ſinne which is but little in the nature of it, may be a very great one in the circumſtances of it. As there are ſome mercies which we receive from God, little in their kinde, yet great in their circumſtances, and very obligeing; ſo are our ſins. Some ſins are very horrid in their own nature, they lay the conſcience waſte, and eat out the very principles of Godlineſſe, ſuch are Atheiſme, Blaſphemy, and Idolatry. The ſinne of the people of *Iſrael* in making Gods of Gold? how deteſtable was it? a golden God, what an ugly ſight is that? and indeed there are many ſinnes which by how much they have the more externall beauty and glory upon them, the more ugly and filthy they are. Other ſins are ſmall in their kinde, yet by additionall conſiderations they ſwell into an immenſe vaſtneſſe, and become out of meaſure ſinfull.

For inſtance, firſt to ſinne againſt light, that is, not onely to commit a knowne ſin, but to commit it knowingly, ('Tis poſſible, that while we know ſuch a thing to be a ſinne, yet to doe it unknowingly, or not to know that we have done it; He that knoweth it is a ſinne to tell any untruth, may yet tell one and not know it: But) when we doe that which is a knowne ſin, and likewiſe know that we doe it, then we have no cloake for our ſin

Secondly, To ſin againſt many received mercies, greatens it exceedingly; Thus the Lord aggravates the ſinne of *David*, I have done thus, and thus for thee, and if this had been too little, I would moreover have given thee ſuch and ſuch things; *Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the commandement of the Lord to doe evill in his ſight*, 2 Sam. 12. 8, 9.

Thirdly, It greatens ſinne when continued in after warnings, and renewed admonitions; *He that being often reproved hardneth his necke, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy*, (Prov. 29. 1.) The Greatneſſe of his puniſhment, (he ſhall be (not afflicted, but) *deſtroyed*) the quicknes of it (he ſhall *ſuddenly be deſtroyed*) the irrecoverableneſſe of it (and that without remedy) all theſe with one conſent vote the greatnes of that ſinne, whatſoever it be in its kinde, which is perſiſted in after perſwaſion to deſiſt and depart from it. The Church is commanded to paſſe her extreameſt cenſure upon that offending brother, who having been told his fault; firſt, by that brother alone whom he hath offended; ſecondly, by him and two more aſſociated as witneſſes; thirdly, then, by the Church gathered in the name of Chriſt. (*Matth.* 18 16, 17.) *But if he will not heare thee, then take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word may be eſtabliſhed: and if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publicane. It is dangerous enough to ſin againſt a rule, but 'tis more dangerous to ſin againſt a reproofe; eſpecially againſt the reproofe of a whole Church.*

Fourthly, When we ſin in the ſight of judgements upon our ſelves, or others, whether for the ſame, or other ſins: This is as if a thief ſhould ſteal before the Judge, or under the gibbet while he ſeeth others arraigned or executed for ſtealing. It is very evil to ſin againſt Judgements threatned, but it is far worſe to ſin againſt Judgements executed: That wrath which is revealed from heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſſe to the ear in the word of God, ſhould ſtop us from ſin, much more that which is revealed to the eye in the workes of God.

Fiftly, When we ſin againſt our own promiſes not to ſin, when our own words condemne us, as well as the word of God, this ſtaynes every ſin with a double guilt.

Sixtly, The greatning of a ſin is from the repeating of it after it hath been repented of. To fall into any ſin out of which we have riſen, makes our fall the more grievous; when a ſinner lickes up his own vomit, when he builds againe the things which he had deſtroyed, he makes himſelfe a tranſgreſſor indeed. They who repent not cannot expect mercy, what remaines then for them but a certain fearfull expectation of Judgement, who repent of their repentings.

Seventhly, Sin is greatly increaſed when acted with deliberation; to be hurried into a ſinne though great, is not ſo great as to doe a leſſe evill conſultively, or to adviſe upon it and doe it; ſome ſinne for want of advice, many ſin againſt advice, and not a few ſin with advice, that is adviſedly. *'Tis hard to finde out a way to give them comfort, who ſin with counſell.* They who are wiſe to doe evill, or who doe evill as a piece of their wiſdome (ſuch every deliberate action is eſteemed to be),

be) will be found the greatest fools. *All sin is folly, but those sins have most of the fool in them, which we thinke, we doe wisely* In all these cases, we may well say to any man, as *Eliphaz* here to *Job*; *Is not thy wickednesse great?*

And thine iniquity infinite.

עדה *perversitas & non finis iniquitatibus tuis.* Heb. ἀναρίθμητοι 70. *Rebellio æterna.* Vatabl.

The word which we translate *iniquity*, implyeth perversenesse, or frowardnesse in sinning; *Is not thine iniquity infinite.* The Hebrew is, *There is no end to thy iniquity*, or thou dost commit iniquity without end. The Septuagint render it thus; *Are not thy iniquities so many that they cannot be numbred? are they not innumerable?* Another thus; *Is not thy rebellion eternall?* And so the sence reacheth eyther the multiplication of acts, or the continuation of time. Our reading is comprehensive of both; *Is not thine iniquity infinite?*

But how could *Eliphaz* make such a supposition as this? seeing there is nothing infinite but God, and it is altogether impossible that there should be *two infinites. The heavens cannot hold two Sunnes, much lesse can the world hold two infinites.* God is The onely Infinite; therefore sin is not infinite as God is innite; First, that is infinite which is without end; secoudly, that is infinite which is withont bound, in both God is infinite; As he had no beginning, so he shall have no end or period of his being; He is infinite in reference to duration or time; and he is infinite in reference to place or extent; He fills heaven and earth; and the heaven of heavens cannot containe him. The Hebrew phrase in the Text, *without end*, answers our translation, *infinite*; for infinite is that which hath no bounds or end. So then in a strict and proper sence, there is nothing infinite but God. And infinity runneth through all the titles of God, he is infinite in power, infinite in power, infinite in wisdome, justice, righteousnesse, and mercy; It remains then to be further considered, how we may understand this question, *Is not thine iniquity infinite?*

I answer sin is not infinite properly, yet in a vulgar sence, sinne may be called infinite, for according to common acception, we call that infinite which is very great, or which exceeds all ordinary bounds, though not all bounds; onely that is properly infinite which exceeds all bounds, but we usually say.

say that is infinite which exceeds ordinary bounds. Thus some mens sins only are infinite. For though every sin be a breaking of the bounds which God hath set us, either in accesse or in defect; yet they who sin after a common rate or proportion of sinning, may be said to keepe their bounds in sinning. For what the Apostle speakes of some tryalls and Temptations (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) the same may be said of some sinnes and transgressions, that *they are common to man.* But they who sin (as the Prophet speakes) with a high hand, or with both hands greedily, they who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with cart-roapes, these doe not only break the everlasting bounds of the Law, but the ordinary bounds of sin. Their sins are not common, (in the act, though the principle be) to man; They sin as few men ever sinned, they sin like Devils rather then like men, and therefore (under this notion) their sin is deservedly called infinite.

Secondly, We may say, that sin hath an infinitenesse in it in reference to the object, God, and so not only a great sin, and many sins, but small sinnes, or any one sinne may be said to have an infinitenesse in it, because it is committed against an infinite God. And hence it is that nothing can expiate sinne but what hath an infinitenesse in it; the least sin, calls for the blood of Christ to take it away, which blood hath a kinde of infinity in it; for though the sufferings and bloud of Christ were not properly infinite, because they were the sufferings of the humane nature, yet the Divine nature shed forth an infinite worth and value upon his sufferings; and therefore we are said to be *redeemed* (or purchased) *by the blood of God* (Act. 20. 28.) that is, by the blood of that person who is God, though the humane nature only was capable of having blood shed. Thus we may say, that the least sin, with respect to the object is infinite, God himselfe being offended and wronged by every sin.

Thirdly, As this infinitenesse may be considered in reference to the extent of any one sinne (that reaching as high as God) so to the number, or rather to the numberlesse of our sins. There is an Arithmeticall as well as a Geometricall infinity in sin. Thus the Septuagint (as was said before) render the Text; *Are not thine iniquities innumerable?* That hath a kinde

kinde of infinity which cannot be numbred; but cannot our sins be numbred? are they infinite in number?

I answer, sinnes may be considered two wayes; first, in their species and kinds; secondly, in their acts, if we consider sinnes in their species and kinds, so they are not innumerable, for it is possible to number up all the severall heads, divisions, and kinds of sinne; but if we consider sin in reference to acts, so every mans sins are innumerable; yet this innumerableneſſe of sins in reference to acts, may be considered either absolutely, or as to us. The acts of sin, are not absolutely or in themselves innumerable, but as to us they are innumerable: they are more then any man can number. *John* saith, (*Revel* 7. 9.) *After this I beheld, and loe a great multitude, which no man could number* (besides those that were sealed of every Tribe,) *of all Nations, and Kindreds,* &c) This great multitude was not in it selfe without number, but as to mans arithmeticke it was, no man could number it. The hairs of our head, and the sands of the Sea, are numerable to God, but to us innumerable. *David* (Psal. 40 12.) speaks first of *innumerable evills*, and then of *innumerable sinnes*; *innumerable evills compasse me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more then the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me*; when he saith, *they are more then the haires of my head*, his meaning is, they are innumerable; I can no more tell the summe of my sinnes, then the summe of my haires. Christ to assure his Disciples in time of their afflictions and sufferings, that he will take care of them, tells them; *The very hayres of your head are all numbred*, (Mat. 10. 30) As if he had said, seeing God taketh care of those inconsiderable (nor parts, but excrements of the body, surely then he will take care of those more noble parts of your bodies, and most of all of that most noble part of you, (which is your all) your soules. The hayres of our heads are innumerable to us, but God numbers them. The sins of our hearts and lives are all numbred by God. *Thou tellest my wandrings*, (saith holy *David*, Psal. 56. 8.) he means it of his wandrings by persecution, and 'tis as true of his wandrings by transgression. But what man knowes the errors or wandrings either of his heart or life (*Psal.* 19. 12.) He that hath fewest sins, hath more then he can number; and therefore every mans sins are to him, in number infinite.

Fourthly, Iniquities may be called infinite in reference to the will, or the spirit of him that committeth those iniquities: those sinnes are without bounds, to which man would never set a bound. The naturall man would never end sinning, therefore his sins are without end, or infinite. The Prophet (*Jer.* 13. 27.) speakes reprovingly to that people in the name of the Lord, *I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdneſſe of thy whoredome, and thine abominations on the hills in the fields; woe unto thee, O Jeruſalem, wilt thou not be made cleane, when ſhall it once be?* As if he had said; O *Jeruſalem*, thou hast no will to be made clean, or thou wouldst never be cleane, if thou mightest have thy will; *When ſhall it once be?* The time is yet to come when thou wouldest have it to be so; thou hast a minde to poliute thy selfe still, but no minde to wash thy selfe from thy pollution. The sins of a person or people are then infinite, or without end, when they discover that they have no minde to leave sinning. A godly mans desires to doe good are infinite, and so are the desires of a wicked man to doe evill. This prophet had spoken to *Jeruſalem* in the same language (*Chap.* 4. 14.) *How long ſhall vain thoughts lodge in thee?* when wilt thou be weary of these lodgers, when wilt thou bid these guests be gone, whom thou hast thus long bid welcome? The Church of God doth sometimes suffer evill to lodge very long in her, even in the middest of her, as it were, at her very heart; but *the world* lodgeth *or lieth* (continually) *in evill* (1 Joh. 5. 19.) and there (as it is the world) it will lye for ever, soake and steept in evill. Some give this as one reason to justifie the infiniteneſſe or everlastingneſſe of the punishment that is laid upon impenitent sinners in hell. The damned are under endlesse sufferings, because they would have sinned without end; A wicked man would live long, yea he would have no end of his life here, he would live ever, that he might sinne ever; therefore the Lord giveth him a life, not such a one as he would have, but such a one as he deserves to have, which is indeed a death for ever, They dye eternally for sin, who would have lived eternally in sin. Take a Scripture or two more to illustrate this way of the infinity of mans sinne, (*Jer.* 8. 5) *Why is this people of Jeruſalem ſlidden back, by a perpetual back ſliding;*

Vellet ſine fine vivere ut poſſet ſine fine peccare. Greg.

they hold fast deceit, they refuse to returne; Here are three phrases noting this one thing. First, *They hold fast deceit*; secondly, *They refused to return*; thirdly, *Their's was a perpetuall backsliding*, or as some read it, *an eternall rebellion, an obstinate rebellion, a strong and mighty rebellion*; the Seventy call it, *an impudent shamelesse rebellion*: all these are proper Epithites of that obstinacy, and setledn esse of resolution, which is in the heart of man by nature to continue in sinne; yet there is a further rendering of the words, which as the Originall will beare, so it hath an elegancy in it, *Why is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a conquering, or a prevayling back sliding?* A perpetuall back-sliding hath conquest or triumph attributed to it upon a twofold consideration; first, in reference to other sinnes; finall obstinacy, or impenitency lifts up it's head above all other sinnes, and is as King among them, impenitency under any sin committed, is greater then the sin committed; not to repent of the evill we have done, is worse then the evill which we doe. Impenitency seales the soule under condemnation. Repentance conquers sin, but impenitency is the conquering sin. Secondly, 'tis called a triumphing or conquering sin, because it seemes (as it were) to carry the day against the mercy and goodnesse of God, that's a sad conquest indeed; not that any sinne, no nor impenitency for sinne, exceeds the mercy and goodnesse of God; for his thoughts of mercy are as high above our acts of sin, as they are above our thoughts of his mercy, and that is as high as the heaven is in comparison of the earth. (*Isa.* 55. 9.) But the mercy of the Lord is said to be overcome by perpetuall backslidings, because the Lord will not be mercifull to such; thus finall impenitency may be called a triumphing or conquering sin, seeing the mercy of God seemes to yeeld unto it. They will not humble themselves to seeke mercy, yea they slight and despise mercy, therefore they shall not finde mercy. The Prophet *Jeremie* represents the Lord thus expostulating again with the Jewish Nation (*Ch.* 5. 22, 23.) *Feare ye not me, saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the Sea by a perpetuall decree that it cannot passe it, and though the waves thereof tosse themselves, yet can they not prevaile, and though they roare, yet can they not passe over it; but this people hath a revolting*

ting and rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone. The words, as I conceive, have these two things in them; first, that the Lord is to be feared who doth such things, who sets bounds to the Sea, &c. Secondly, that the wickednesse of mans heart is admirable, or rather that we are to be astonished at the wickednesse of mans heart, which is more boysterous and disobedient, then the raging waves of the Sea. The Lord sets bounds to the waves of the Sea, which waves in their own nature are altogether boundlesse; liquid waves have no bounds of their own, yet the Lord having put bounds to them, they are kept in bounds; *The sand bounds the Sea, so that though the waves thereof tosse, they cannot prevaile, though they roare they cannot passe over; but this people have revolted, and are gone*; As if he had said, I the Lord have put a bound to the Sea, I have also set a bound to the wickednesse of mans heart; what is that? my Word, my Law. The Law of God is a morall bound to stop and [illegible] to compasse the raging waves of mans corruption. God [illegible] put an eternall bound by sword and judgement to stop men whither they will or no from sin, but he always puts a morall bound to stop them; this is supposed in the Text, I put a bound to the Sea, to the Sea also of mans heart, to the wickednesse that is there, but this people are revolted and gone, they have broken all my bounds, (even that perpetuall decree of my righteous Law). Now as when the Sea breaks its bounds, the waters flow infinitely, there is no stopping them; so when the heart of man breaks bounds, revolts and is gone, he sinnes infinitely, he makes no end of sinning. By these Scriptures we may understand in what sence the iniquities of wicked men may be said to be infinite, though nothing is infinite in a strict and proper sence, but God himselfe.

Is not thy wickednesse great, and thine iniquity infinite?

But hath *Job* given *Eliphaz* any just occasion of this surmise, that his sin was in this sence infinite? Did he ever observe in her wickednesse in generall, or those particular wickednesses which he presently enumerates, taking a pledge, denying reliefe of the poor, stripping the naked, &c? had he seene any of these evills acted by *Job*? certainly he had not; *Job* was a man

man of another frame of life then theſe things impore; theſe black lines and colours would never make the picture of *Jobs* heart or life; this is as ill a draught of a man as could be made; yet *Eliphaz* puts all this upon *Job*, at leaſt by ſuppoſition; is it not thus? but what reaſon had he for this ſuppoſition? none but this, the greatneſſe of his affliction; the infinite troubles that were upon him; God ſet no bounds to *Jobs* ſorrowes, therefore he thought *Job* had ſinned beyond all bounds.

Hence obſerve;

We are ready to judge their ſins great, who are the greateſt ſufferers.

Though we know nothing by them, though we can charge nothing upon them, yet this thought riſeth naturally in us, when we ſee any under great and extraordinary ſufferings, ſurely they are great [illegible] ary ſinners. The worſt of ſinners never ſuffe[illegible]orld, then the beſt of Saints; Witneſs thoſe Jewiſh worthyes, whoſe torments are reported by the author to the *Hebrewes*, (chap. 11. 37.) and as theſe were adjudged to ſuffer, becauſe they were thought the worſt of ſinners, ſo, doubtleſſe, many who ſaw them ſuffer thought them ſuch, though they knew nothing done by them to make them ſuch. Read alſo this Spirit (*Luk.* 13. 2. *Act* 28. 4.) This hath been formerly obſerved from other paſſages in this book, and therefore I only touch it, and paſſe away.

Again, *Eliphaz* ſeemes to take *Job* off from the wrong ground of his ſufferings, and tells him, though he looked to other reaſons, yet the true reaſon was the greatneſſe of his wickedneſſe, and the numberleſneſſe of his iniquities.

Hence obſerve;

That few thinke of, or hitt upon any other cauſe of ſuffering but ſinne.

Sin is ſo much and ſo often the cauſe of ſuffering, that we doe it no wrong to ſuſpect it as the cauſe of all ſufferings; and it is indeed one kinde of cauſe (*cauſa ſine qua non*) of all our ſufferings, ſo that we can hardly wrong ſin by this ſuſpition, but we may eaſily wrong both God and man by it. When the blind man came before Chriſt, his Diſciples asked him, ſaying; *Maſter, who did ſin, this man or his Parents, that he was born blinde*; they could hit upon nothing but ſin, why the man was born blinde. (*John* 9. 2.) But at the third verſe, Chriſt anſwered, *Neither hath this man ſinned, nor his Parents*; he vindicates both from this ſuſpiſition. What man was this? and who were his parents, that they ſinned not? were they cleane from ſin? not ſo neither, but the meaning of Chriſt is this, neither hath this man ſinned, nor his parents, ſo, as that either his ſin or theirs ſhould be reckoned the ſpeciall cauſe why he was born blind. There was ſomewhat elſe in it, which the Diſciples took no notice of, nor did they underſtand. Chriſt doth not deny but that a mans own ſinne, and the ſin of his parents may be a cauſe of blindneſſe; but neither the one nor the other was the cauſe in that mans caſe; as if Chriſt had ſaid; Can you thinke of nothing elſe why a man is afflicted but only his ſinne? There are many other cauſes of ſuffering beſides that. The cauſe why ſome ſuffer is the tryall of their graces. The cauſe why many ſuffer, is to bear witneſſe to the truth, and to encourage others both in the profeſſion of it, and in perſecutions for it. And Chriſt particularly aſſigns another cauſe of the ſufferings of the blind man, *That the worke of God might be made manifeſt in him*: That the worke of God in his power and mercy might be ſeene in reſtoring this man to his ſight, therefore was he born without the power of ſeeing. The blindneſſe of that man was an occaſion to make a very glorious diſcovery of God. Much of God had not been ſo eminently ſeene at that time, if that man had alwayes ſeen. Many are caſt down upon beds of ſickneſſe, or into a ſtate of poverty, that the worke of God in raiſing them up to health and plenty may be made manifeſt. The deſigne of God lookes beyond the ſin of man in the afflictions of moſt men, yet man ſeldome lookes beyond it.

Thirdly, Note from the whole verſe;

That we are more ready to judge the ſins of others great, then our own.

Is not thy wickedneſſe great, and thine iniquities infinite? Eliphaz might have ſaid as much of himſelfe and his own ſinne; and it had been but a duty to have done ſo; we ſhould not aggravate the ſins of others, nor extenuate or leſſen our own, we ſhould

should not set the sins of others in open light, nor provide coverings for our own, yet most commonly we run the contrary course: we have a favourable opinion, and excuses ready for what we have done, while we have hard thoughts of, and give harsh censures upon what others doe; our own sins we can call moats, and the sinne of others beames. The better any man is, the better he judges others, and the worse of himselfe, *Paul* spake no complement, while he said, that *he was lesse than the least of all Saints, and the chief of sinners*; usually they who are the severest observers and censurers of others, either flatter, or have not well observed themselves.

Fourthly.

Forasmuch as *Eliphaz* seeing *Job* under great sufferings, saith to him; *Is not thy wickednesse great?* The counsell in it selfe was seasonable.

Hence observe;

That in time of suffering, it is good both to put our selves and others upon inquiry about our sinnes.

So the Prophet (*Lam.* 3. 39, 40.) *Why doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our wayes, and turn again to the Lord*; times of afflictions should be times of inquisition, when the Lord is smiting, we should be searching; when we have received many wounds, it is time for us to be suspecting our selves of many sins; and the counsell of others is not to be rejected, when seeing us in sorrow, they advise us to consider what our sins are, how great and how many. For though we should be tender in pressing those who are under the load and burden of affliction, with the burden of their sins, yet they who are so, shall doe well and wisely to presse it upon themselves.

Fiftly, Whereas *Eliphaz* saith, *Is not thy wickednesse great, and thine iniquity infinite?* and in the next verse, concludes upit; *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for naught*, &c. All which were but conjectures and suspitions.

Observe;

That suppositions and conjectures are no fit grounds, upon which to build a judgment concerning the faultines of others.

We must not Censure upon, *I hear so, I suppose so, I thinke so*; but upon, *I know it is so*; many have run into great sinne by judging

judging the sins of others Great. *Judge not* (saith our Saviour, *Matth.* 7. 1.) *that ye be not judged.* He speakes not against all judgment, but either, first, against severe and harsh judging, or secondly, against false judging, or thirdly, against inconsiderate or rash judging. When we judge without due ground, *not knowing the why or wherefore* of our Judgement, take heed of such judging, *that ye be not judged*, that is lest having judged others unduely, ye receive your due in Judgement. *Eliphaz* had nothing upon knowledge to charge *Job* for, yet while he questions, *Is not thy wickednesse great?* He doth more then seemingly conclude that his sin was very great, and his iniquities infinite. And in the next verse in stead of querying, he comes to peremptory concluding;

Vers. 6. *For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their cloathing.*

Now begins the speciall charge, or inditement, now he innumerates severall sinnes; As if he had said; *What doest thou stand looking for matter, or reasons why thou art thus afflicted, here are the reasons, I will name them to thee; Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.* Thus *Eliphaz* powreth upon him, and dischargeth whole volyes of shot, but all at randome, and besides the marke. Before, he spake in the third person, he speaks now in the second, *thou, thou, thou art the man, thou hast taken a pledge.* Againe, *Eliphaz* had formerly dealt with *Job* as an hypocrite; he then granted that he had some shewes of holinesse, and some appearance or counterfeit of goodnesse at least, now he denieth that; now he pulls off his visour or maske, and objects against him barefaced. Before he charged him with falsenesse of heart, while he professed and practised Religion; but now he objects such practises against him, as no man doth who hath but a profession of religion. He objects those crimes against him which are proper to prophane open sinners, to common oppressors, who raise themselves upon the ruins, and inrich themselves by the spoyles of their weaker brethren; These are sinners not only against the Law of God, but light of nature; these are acts not onely of impiety, but of cruelty, inhumanity, and tyranny.

Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.

Job was a Magistrate, and this would have aggravated his sin exceedingly, if it had been true; for any man to oppresse another is very wickednesse; but for a Magistrate who is set up to be a Protector, a reliever of others, a helper of the friendlesse, and a Judge of the widdow, for him to carry himselfe thus, for him to oppresse and grind the faces of the poore, is most tyrannicall. Thus *Aristotle* defines a Tyrant; *He is one that rules so as to turne all to his own private benefit or profit*: he that governs so, governs for himselfe; Whereas true government seekes and respects the good of others. Just governours are a generall blessing, and their ayme is the *common*, not their *private wealth*. Thus *Elphaz* renders *Job* a very Tyrant, who when he should be a nursing-father to his Country, proves a devourer of it, and when he should provide bread for those about him, he takes their bread, yea their blood from them, and gives them a stone.

Tyrannus est, Qui ita dominatur, ut ad proprium commodum & utilitatem omnia conferat. Arist. lib. 4. polit. & 1. Ethic.

Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.

There are three aggravations of his supposed sinne in these words.

First, That he tooke a pledge.

Secondly, That he tooke it of a brother.

Thirdly, That he tooke it for nought.

Thou hast taken a pledge] The Hebrew is no more then this, *Thou hast pledged*. The word signifies also to binde, or fasten a thing as with a coard, and the reason is, because a pledge given is an obligation, a ty or bond to performe the promise made, or pay the debt contracted. A promise is an audible bond, but a pledge is a visible bond. It is no sin in it selfe to take a pledge, no more then it is a sin to buy, sell, or to ingage a man any other way, to performe a bargaine, or repay a debt. The Law of God published by *Moses* allowed the taking of a pledge, what is it then which *Eliphaz* chargeth upon *Job* as sinfull in taking a pledge? I conceive there are two things which shew sinfulnesse in taking a pledge, and that both are implyed here.

In Hebræo simplex est verbum חבל *quod est pignorare aut pignus accipere idem est obligare.*

First, He intimates that *Job* did not waite to receive a pledge at

at the hand of his brother, but he did as it were rush in upon him, and tooke the pledge; for so tender was the Lord in reference to the poore of his people, or to those that should be in need to borrow of their brethren, and so give a pledge for security; that he giveth this speciall order (*Deut.* 24. 10.) *When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not goe into his house to fetch his pledge* (it was not unlawfull to receive a pledge from his brother, but to goe into his house was against the Law) *but thou shalt stand abroad, and the man shall bring it out to thee.* Some conceive that this was the sin charged upon *Job*; *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother, thou hast not according to this expresse Law of God tarried for it*; and supposing that *Eliphaz* and *Job* lived before the giving of that Law, yet the light of nature teacheth, that we should not presse a man, or pull his pledge from him, but that the borrower should goe into his house, and bringing his pledge, deliver it up freely with his own hand into the hand of the lender. It is an affliction to have need to borrow, and therefore the borrower should be so tenderly dealt with by the lender as not to adde affliction to him. It is a curtesie to lend to him that is in need, but as some in giving, so most in lending spoyle all the curtesie of it; while they lend their money they snatch or gripe at their security; whereas the old Law said (the equity whereof, though not the formality, remaines to this day) *Thou shalt not goe into thy brothers house to fetch his pledge, but thou shalt stand abroad and the man shall bring it out to thee.* Some Critticks tells us that this is signified in the Etymologie of the Latine word, which signifies a *pledge*. Namely, that the lender should not take but receive it from the hand of the borrower. It is the duty of borrowers to pay: *The wicked borroweth and payeth not againe,* (*Psal.* 37. 21.) The Apostles rule to the Godly is; *Owe no man any thing but to love one another,* (Rom. 13.8.) Now, as it is the duty of the borrower to pay, so of the lender to be moderate, and not to exact or impose heavily upon him, for the assuring of his payments. As he that buyeth should be as if he bought not, so he that lends should be (in this respect) as if he lent not; He should lend with so much mildnesse and meekenesse of spirit, as if he gave, rather then lent; or as if (the contrary whereof *Solomon* found in his experience, *Pro.* 22. 7.) himselfe

Ipsa pignoris etymologia, docere hominem videtur pignus non tam propria manu auferendum ab invito & misero debitore, quam accipiendum non nisi ipsius debitoris manu oblatum: pignus enim appellatum est a pugno, quia res quæ pignori dantur, manu traduntur. Cajus.

the lender, were ſervant to the borrower. *Job* is charged firſt with fayling in this; As if he had over eagerly preſſed upon his brother for a pledge, *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother.*

Secondly, The taking a pledge from a brother, may be expounded of withholding a pledge when it is called for, or of the not reſtoring it, when the Covenants are performed. This is not onely to take it, but to take it away; ſuppoſe the pledge hath been given into a mans hand, yet if he will not reſtore it, or give it backe out of his hand when called for, but make excuſes, or delayes, *This is to take away the pledge.* And thus ſome make out the ſin of the Text; *Thou haſt taken a pledge*; that is, thou haſt ſwept it quite away, thou haſt refuſed to reſtore the pledge, when that which was borrowed upon it, hath been in due time tendered to be payed or reſtored. The Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 18. 14, 15, 16.) numbers the contrary practices among thoſe Negatives, for which the Lord declares himſelfe much pleaſed with the ſon of a wicked father; *A ſon that ſeeth all his fathers ſinnes, that he hath done, and doth not ſuch like, that hath not eaten upon the mountaines, neither hath lift up his eyes to the idolls of the houſe of Iſrael, that hath not defiled his neighbours wife, neither hath oppreſſed any; that hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath ſpoyled by violence, &c. he ſhall not dye for the iniquity of his father, he ſhall ſurely live.* Here ſinning in the matter of a pledge, is pitcht upon with-holding it, not upon taking it. For though a man have a pledge fairely delivered up to him, though he doe not ruſh into the borrowers houſe, and there be his own carver, taking what himſelfe liſteth to ſecure that which he hath lent, yet if he withhold the pledge when it is required, and deſired to be returned upon promiſed ſatisfaction made, this is very ſinfull and oppreſſive. Some when they get a good thing in their hands, they are loath to part with it, and will have a device to prove it forfeited by the borrower, when indeed, 'tis only coveted by the lender.

Hence note;

That violently to take or unjuſtly to detain the pledge committed to us, is to act the part of the oppreſſor.

That Law which ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not ſteale*, doth as much forbid

bid the detaining in our hands, as the laying of our hands upon that which is is our neighbours. And he that withholds the pledge when the debtor is ready and offers to redeeme it, is like him that with-holds the debt when the lender deſires him, and he is able to repay it. Thou haſt taken or with holden *a pledge*, That's thy ſin.

Secondly, There is a further aggravation of ſin in the words reſpecting the perſon from which the pledge was taken; A *Brother*: *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother.* This addeth to the ſinne; we ſhould be kinde to all, but eſpecially to a brother. A brother, may be taken either ſtrictly for one next or neere by birth or bloud, a brother by conſanguinity: ſuch are in the moſt proper ſence, our brethren and our own fleſh. Or the word *brother* may be taken in a large ſence, for any that are neere to us, as being either of the ſame profeſſion of Religion with us, or living in the ſame City, ſociety, or under the ſame Government with us. Theſe are our brethren and our own fleſh too. And ſo the Prophet calleth them even when pinched with hunger and nakedneſſe, the more to move the bowels of our compaſſion towards them, (*Iſa.* 58. 7.) *When thou ſeeſt the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy ſelfe from thy own fleſh*; As richly cloathed as thou art, and as naked as they are, thine own fleſh they are. When *Eliphaz* ſaith, *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother*, he takes in brethren under all diſtinctions. This he adds to highten *Jobs* ſin; *Thou took'ſt a pledge from thy brother.*

Hence note;

That as it is unjuſt and uncharitable to wrong any man, ſo moſt of all thoſe that are neere to us.

To wrong a brother of any latitude or degree is ſinfull, and ſtill the neerer the brother is, the more ſinfull it is to wrong him: the ſin which a man commits againſt himſelfe: is therefore greateſt of all, becauſe a man is neereſt to himſelfe; ſo in proportion the neerer any one is to us in any relation, the more we ſinne in wronging him. The Apoſtle puts it under that notion; *If a brother or a ſiſter be naked, and deſtitute of dayly food*, &c. *Jam.* 2. 15. And againe, 1 *Joh.* 3. 17. *Whoſoever hath this worlds good, and ſeeth his brother have need, and ſhutteth up his*

his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? That is, the love of God doth not at all dwell in him, or at best it dwelleth very poorely and undiscernably in him. To see strangers yea enemies destitute and not relieve them, is uncharitable; but to see a brother or a sister, and chiefly a brother or a sister in spirituall relation (for of such I conceive the Apostle speakes particularly, in those places, I say, to see such destitute and not to relieve them, this is highest uncharitablenesse.

Againe, Some render thus, (not *thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother*, but) *Thou hast taken thy brother for a pledge.* This speakes yet louder, and is a sin of a blacker colour then the former; thou hast not onely taken thy brothers pledge? but himselfe, his very person for security or for payment. But what is it to take a mans brother for a pledge? or how was that done? These two things may be in it, either first more generally thou hast imprisoned him. As (*Matth.* 18. 28.) 'tis said of the cruell Creditour that he took his brother, *and cast him into prison til he should pay the utmost farthing*: now though all kinde of imprisonment be not sinfull, not only as to the law of Nations, but as to the Law of God; yet cruell imprisonment is very sinfull; *Thou hast taken thy brother for a pledge*: Thou hast not spared his person when he had not a purse to pay thee; *Thou hast* (as it hath been said among us) *made dice of his bones.* Some would never pay, were it not for feare of a prison; but to put and detaine a poore man in prison when he hath nothing to pay, is not only unchristian, but barbarous and inhumane. Or secondly (which was used in ancient times) *Thou hast taken thy brother for a pledge*, that is, thou hast made him thy slave: To be cast into prison is a slavery, and a man may be made a slave, yet not imprisoned. And though it may be a duty (when we have nothing else to satisfie it with) to worke out a debt, yet it is a very high severity for to force a debtor to pay with his worke. We reade how the poore widdow came to *Elisha* the Prophet, and bemoaned her case to him, (2 *King.* 4. 1.) *Thy servant my husband is dead, and thou knoweest that thy servant did feare the Lord, and the creditour is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen*; This is to take a brother for a pledge; The Prophet seems to ayme at this while he describes

In pignus accepisti fratres tuos. Sept.

scribes those hypocriticall fasts among the Jewes (*Isa.* 58. 6.) *Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickednesse, to undoe the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed goe free, and that ye breake every yoake*? To fast and not to reforme, is to mocke God rather then to humble our selves. Here are the true fruits of fasting. And they all run into the poynt in hand, the avoyding and turning from all injurious and vexatious dealings with our brethren. First, *the bands of wickednesse*, that is, of oppressing Laws or pinching contracts. Secondly, *heavy burdens*, either of services or taxes; From these the oppressed should be freed, and every yoake imposed, by these or any other way of grievance, broken from off the neckes of our brethren.

There is yet one word more, very considerable in the Text, for the hightning of this sinne.

Thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother for nought: or without cause; This word was opened (*Chap.* 1. 9.) where Satan suggests against *Jobs* sincerity, *doth Job serve God for nought*. And againe (*Chap.* 2. 3.) where the Lord asserts and vindicates the sincerity of *Job* against Satans calumniations; *Thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause*; That is, thou hadst no cause to move me so against him; he is no such mercenary servant as thou hast maliciously pretended. Thus here, *Thou hast taken a Pledge of thy brother for nought, or without cause*: that is, without any necessary cause, there was no reason thou shouldest take a pledge from thy brother when thou tookest it; thou mightest have trusted him, but thou wouldest not any further then thou hadst full security put into thy hand. or rather then thou didst take it into thy hand, whether he would or no. As if he had said; Thou wouldedst not releive thy brothers poverty, upon the promises which God makes to those who charitably relieve the poore; thou wouldest neither take Gods word, nor trust thy brother in any case, further then thou didst see him; unlesse he would put into thy hand, thou wouldest not put into his. True charity must and will make some ventures; *Cast thy bread upon the waters* (saith *Solomon Eccl.* 11 1.) A good man is a Merchant and will trust his bread where he hath no more assurance of a safe returne, then the Merchant hath of his Ship and Lading from the winds and waters.

Thou

Thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother.

Againe, *Without cause or for nought*, may have this meaning, thou didst oblidge thy brother to restore that which really and indeed he never received from thee: thou didst put a debt to thy brothers account which he never made by borrowing *David* complaines of such kinde of unkind usage (*Psal* 69. 4.) *They that hate me without cause, are moe then the hayres of my head: They that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I tooke not away*; That is, which I took not away, either as borrowed of them, or as stolne from them. I was neither a debtor, nor a thiefe, I had nothing of theirs in my hands, yet I was forced to restore. This is the worst sort of *taking a pledge for nought*.

Solent divites flagere se creditores dy alice debitores.

Thirdly, *For nought*; That is, when there was no reason to take so great a pledge of thy brother, the thing which thou didst lend him was but some trifle, yet thou wouldest have a pledge of thy brother for it; thou wouldest have great security for an inconsiderable debt; that's the course of many oppressors, by lending a little they will have much to secure it. And this is to take a pledge from a brother for nought, there should be some equality between the debt and the security, he that lends a trifle, a small matter, and requires great assurance, takes a pledge of his brother for nought. So that all unreasonable and unequall demands for security, either taking (where charity bids us trust) from the poore, or taking it (where in justice we should not take any thing) when nothing was lent, or when there is no reason we should take so much; any of these harsh and injurious practices, is the *taking a pledge of our brother for nought*.

Hence observe;

That the lesse cause we have to do any evil, the greater is the evil which we doe.

But hath any man a cause to doe any evill; he hath not; by cause I meane a provocation; there is no cause for which we should doe any evill, but there may be many provocations or temptations to doe evill; *Peninah* provoked *Hannah* sore to make her fret (1 *Sam.* 1. 6.) It was not for nought or without cause that *Moses* his passion was stirr'd, and that he spake unadvisedly

unadvisedly with his lips, the murmurings and complainings of that unsteady people *provoked his Spirit.* (Psal. 106. 33.) Now the lesse provocation, the greater alwayes is the sinne; as to sinne against admonition, or against any of those meanes that might keep us from sinne, makes the sin greater, so when there is no occasion leading us unto sinne. This was one reason of greatning the sin of our first parents, in eating the forbidden fruit; why did they eate? were they ready to starve? were they in any streights? had they not the whole garden before them? did they not *eate the forbidden fruit without cause, or for nought? Solomon* saith (*Pro.* 6. 30.) *Men doe not despise a thiefe, if he steale to satisfie his soul when he is hungry*; for though to steale for meer hunger doth not take away the sinfulnesse of the fact, yet it doth much abate it; because the man is provoked to do it for the supply of his present and pressing need; But for a rich man (who hath no need) to steale, for a man to steale who is not hungry, how sinfull is it! Our greatest necessities cannot wholly excuse our sin, but to sin where there is no necessity, doth greatly encrease our sinne, *Saul* thought he should come off without blame, when he had so much to say for his rash sacrifice (1 *Sam*, 13. 12.) *I said the Philistines will come down upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord; I forced my selfe therefore, and offered a burnt offering.* But doth *Samuel* approve this plea? We have his resolution in the next verse; *Thou hast done foolishly, thou hast not kept the Commandement of the Lord thy God.* Though *Saul* found himselfe under a moral force to doe what he did, yet that did not free him eyther from guilt or punishment when he ventured to doe it. *David* smarted for numbring *Israel*, though *Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number them* (1 *Chron.* 21. 1.) What shall we say then of those, who doe more then *David* altogether unprovoked by Satan, who rather tempt themselves, then are tempted unto evill? As the Good we do is so much the better, so the evill we doe is by so much the worse, by how much we doe it the more freely, and unconstrained Thus *Eliphaz* aggravates the first Instance of *Jobs* supposed wickednesse, To take a pledge from a man in the manner expounded, is not onely illiberal, but sinfull; To take a pledge from a brother in distresse is more sinfull, but to take a pledge of a brother for nought,

nought, is a degree of sin, which hath many degrees of sinfulnesse beyond both the former. *Eliphaz* hath yet but begun *Jobs* Inditement, this is the first Crime objected; A second, and a third, and more are following. *Thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother for nought,*

And stript the naked of their Cloathing.

It may be questioned; If they were naked, how could they be stript of their cloathing? he that is naked hath no cloaths to be stript of. 'Tis gon into a Proverb, *A naked man cannot be stript by a hundred men*; he that hath nothing can loose nothing. How then is it said here; *Thou hast stript the naked of their Cloathing?*

Nudus rectè a centum viris spoliatus.

I answer, *The naked*, are not here to be taken strictly for such as have no cloaths at all, but for those who have but few cloaths, or for such as are but meanly and thinly clothed; any that are poore and low; any who are in want, may be numbred among the naked. 'Tis frequent, as in Scripture, so in Common speech to expresse those as being quite without that of which they have but little. We say of a man that hath but a little knowledge, he is an Ignorant man; and of a man who hath but a little learning, that he is an Illiterate, or an unlearned man. Thus we may say of a man that hath but little store of cloaths, little store of the world about him, that he is naked, that he hath nothing. The Apostle useth this Language (1 *Cor.* 4. 11.) *Even to this present houre, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked*, &c. not that the Apostles went about without cloaths, but they were but mean in their Apparrell, poor in their Appearances, and that he calls nakednesse. So the Apostle *James* in the second Chapter of that Epistle, *vers* 15. *If a Brother or a Sister be naked*, &c. He doth not mean it only of such as have never a rag to cover their nakednesse, but of such as are ill furnished with cloaths. The Lord threatens his own People (*Deut.* 28th from the 4th *ver.* to the 48th) in case of their disobedience, with this affliction; *Because thou servedst not the Lord with gladnesse of heart in the abundance of all things, therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakednes*, &c. That is, thou shalt not have thy Wardrobes stored and filled with change of rayment, but thou shalt feele and

Quædam etiam vera non sunt propter similitudinem eodem vocabulo comprehensa sunt; sic qui male vestitum & penuriâ videt nudum se vidisse dicit. Sen. l. 5. Ben. Cap. 13.

and be pincht with want and poverty. So here; *Thou hast stript the naked of their Cloathing*; That is, those that were ill cloathed, thou hast uncloathed, and in stead of relieving their wants, thou hast encreased them.

And thus the words may allude to the taking of a Pledge, about which *Eliphaz* spake before; *Thou hast stript the naked of their cloathing*. That is, thou hast taken a pledge from thy neighbour, and stript him quite of it. Therefore the Law provided against this oppression (*Exod.* 22. 26.) *If thou at all take thy neighbours rayment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it to him before the Sunne goe down, for it is his Covering*. The breach of which Law is discovered and reproved (*Amos* 2. 8.) *And they lay themselves downe upon cloaths layd to pledge*; That is, they detained them all night, whereas they should have delivered them before the going down of the Sunne. And thus their sinne is aggravated in that it is sayd in the next words, that they did this *by every Altar*. It was their sin to make many Altars. And this encreased their sin, that they durst doe acts of wrong to men, where they pretended to worship God. The like Law is given about the Pledge, *Deut.* 24. 6. *No man shall take the upper, or the nether milstone to pledge, for he taketh a mans life to pledge*; That is, he takes the thing away without which he cannot live; If his milstone be taken away from the Mill, how shall he grind his Corn, to make bread, which is the Staff of life? And againe at the 13th verse of the same Chapter, the Law is renewed in reference to rayment; *In any case thou shalt deliver the pledge again before the Sun goeth down, that he may sleepe in his own Rayment and Bless thee, and it shall be Righteousnes unto thee before the Lord thy God*. Thus we may conceive *Eliphaz* speaking here, though not eying that expresse Law, yet from the Common light of nature, which teacheth that the poor and naked should not be stript of that little provision and small pittance which serves onely to protect them from cold and starving.

Chaldeus legit lectulos oppignerator, Vel certe pro illo ipso vestimento quo & se operit interdiu, aut nocte eitam jacens se contegit.

Further. By these words; *Thou hast stript the naked of their Cloathing*] We may understand not cloathing onely, but all the necessaries of this life, any thing which is of such concernment to our lives as our Cloaths are; for as bread in Scripture is put for all the necessaries of this life; So is Cloathing. *Esa.* 3. 6. *When a man shall take hold of his Brother, saying; Thou hast*

haſt Cloathing; be thou Ruler over us, &c. Thou haſt cloathing, that is, thou haſt goods, thou haſt an Eſtate, thou canſt make proviſion for us; there *Cloathing* is put for all outward Conveniences, as in other Scriptures *Bread* is. So that according to the extent of this interpretation, *Thou haſt ſtript the naked of their Cloathing*, takes in all ſorts of bodily grievances put upon the poor.

Hence obſerve.

That to oppreſſe the poor is the higheſt and greateſt oppreſſion.

It is our duty to Cloath the naked, how great then is their ſin who ſtrip the naked of their cloathing? it is ſinfull & unjuſt violently to take cloaths from him that hath greateſt variety of cloathing, we may not rob the rich, what is it then to take from them who have not? or (as we ſay) *to rob the Hoſpitall*. *Solomon* (Prov. 28. 3.) tels us of an oppreſſion which is very grievous, and that is the oppreſſion of a poore man, which is true both actively, and paſſively, when the poore man is the oppreſſor, 'tis ſo, 'tis ſo alſo when the poore man is the oppreſſed. *Solomon* intends both, for he makes the poore to be the oppreſſed, and a poore man the oppreſſor. *The poor man that oppreſſeth the poor is as a ſweeping raine, which leaveth no food.* 'Tis worſe with the poore when the poore oppreſſe them, then, when the rich oppreſſe them, the rich may oppreſſe them much, but they come not ſo neere, as when a poore man oppreſſeth; for as the imbecilitie of the oppreſſed poore man can give him no helpe, ſo the neceſſity of the oppreſſing poor man will ſhew him no mercy. Nothing doth more harden the heart of a man then his owne want, and he hath little feeling of anothers miſery, who is under the feeling of his owne: He that hath nothing takes what he can get, and his owne hunger devoureth all. The rich man oppreſſing the poore is *a daſhing raine*, the great man oppreſſing the poore is a *thundering raine*, but the poore man oppreſſing the poore *is a ſweeping raine*. As they who never knew poverty, ſo they who know it moſt, have the leaſt ſtock of pity for the poore. Such are a ſweeping rain indeed. There is a refreſhing, a fatning, a filling raine, which the Lord ſends upon the thirſty Earth, this produceth ſtore of food. It raines corne and wine, milke and butter; There is alſo a ſweep-

ſweeping raine that takes away food, and deſtroyes the fruits of the Earth. Such a raine is a poore man oppreſſing the poor *Want is the greateſt ſpoyler*.

Secondly, We may expound the Text thus; *And ſtript the naked of their cloathing*; That is, Thou haſt ſtript them till they are naked; for in Scripture we find the denomination to be taken from the End of the action, or that which the action tends to. As to illuſtrate it a little (*Eſa.* 47. 2.) *Take the milſtones, and grinde meale.* Now we doe not grinde meale, but whole Corne to make meale. So (*Eſay* 44. 15.) *He bakeſh Bread*; Now we doe not bake bread, but dough, that it may come to be bread, when it is bread once it needs no more bakeing. So (*Dan.* 2. 21.) *He giveth wiſdome to the wiſe*; that is, he giveth wiſdome to thoſe who before were rude, and ſo makes them wiſe. Thus here, the denomination of the act is given from that to which the act hath a tendency, *Thou haſt ſtript the naked*, not that they who are naked indeed can be ſtript, but thou haſt ſtript them, & ſo made them naked. This very phraſe is uſed (*Hoſ.* 2. 3.) *Leſt I ſtrip thee naked*, ſaith the Lord to the Church, that is, leſt in ſtripping thee I leave thee naked, leſt I take away all the good things with which thou art Encompaſſed. So here, *Thou haſt ſtript the naked of their cloathing*; That is, thou haſt ſtript them till thou haſt made them naked.

From this learne;

That there is ſuch a Principle of unnaturalneſſe in the nature of man, as to take away all, and leave nothing.

We finde more then Cloaths taken away by ſome, they goe cloſer then to the cloathing (as the Lord complaines, *Mic.* 3. 3.) *Who eate the fleſh of a People, and flay their ſkin from off their backs*; There's oppreſſion and cruelty in blackeſt colours, they will not leave them ſo much as their skin upon their backes. Skin is naturall Cloathing, as Garments are Artificiall Cloathing. Theſe took away not only the cloathing which art, but that which nature had provided and put upon them, they flayed their skin from off their backs. Yet we are not to conceive that they were ſo cruell to pull off their skin, but becauſe they would have all to their very skin, therefore they are ſayd to take skin and all. They who are ſo unmercifull, that they will

will not leave a ragge to cover the skin, are justly charged with that unmercifulnesse, which will not leave so much as their skin to cover their flesh, yea, (as it followes in the same place) *that they would gnaw their bones*, they will have all, Cloaths, skin, and bones, from another, rather then not have enough for themselves. *Cruelty joyned with Covetousnesse knows no bounds.*

Eliphaz having thus shewed some of those particular evills, which he supposed *Job* had done, proceeds to shew what Good he had not done. *Sins of omission render a man as foule and vile, as sins of commission do.* He that doth not the good which he ought and can, doth evill.

Vers. 7. *Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, thou hast withheld bread from the hungry.*

Thou hast not given water to the weary.

Water is a very Common thing, and the word which is here used takes in all naturall waters, the whole Element of water. Seeing then water is not under lock & key, but lyes open to all commers, how comes it to be any mans gift? I answer, first, If we understand the words litterally & strictly, yet sometimes & especially in some places to give a cup of water to drinke, or a bucket of water to wash in, is no small charity to a wearied traveller. But secondly (I conceive) *Job* is taxed with *not giving water*, to shew his refusing to doe the smallest charity. So we finde it expressed (*Matth.* 10. 42.) when Jesus Christ would assure us that the least office of love or respect which we doe to a distressed Saint, to a Beleever upon that account as he is a Beleever, shall be rewarded, he gives it in this language; *Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a Cup of Cold water only in the name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.* As by one of these *little ones*, he meanes any, the least of Beleevers, or righteous Persons; so by the gift that he speaks of, *water*, or *Cold water*, *a Cup of Cold water*, he means the least of favours. Cold water is a cheap commodity, and a little cold water, onely a cup of it, cannot as (some things cannot because they are worth so much) be prized, because it is worth so little, yet he that gives but this little thing, this (almost) nothing in the name of a Disciple, *he shall not lose his reward*

Non inania in eos etiam levia quæ sub frigidæ aquæ nomine designat officia esse decerint. Hilar.

So

So here to set forth the hardnesse of *Jobs* heart (as *Eliphaz* conceived) he puts it in these termes, *Thou hast not given water*, (no not cold water) *to those that are weary*; As if he had said, thou hast not onely denyed a feast, or a banquet of wine, which might put thee to some cost and charges, but thou hast denyed them water, cold water, which is not chargeable at all, which doth not so much as put thee to the cost of a little fire to heat it, or of any ingredient to mix with it, thou hast denyed them this cheapest charity. An old Poet (speaking of a place where water was sold) saith; *That which is lowest prized, a thing of no price, water, is sold here.* Thus far hast thou, O *Job*, (saith *Eliphaz*) fallen below the Law of love; *Thou hast not given water*; And to whom did he not give it. The next word answers that Querie.

... venit vilissima rerum Hic aqua, Horat. Sat: 1.

To the weary.

That is, thou hast not given water to them to whom it doth most properly belong, or who had perfect need of it, *the weary, the thirsty.* There are some to whom we may very well refuse to give water, or any other refreshment of nature; they have enough, if not too much already, not onely in possession, as the rich, but in use or abuse rather, as the intemperate and the drunken; To give water to such is to powre water into the Sea; but thou hast not given it to the weary, not to those who are like the dry and parched ground.

In that the matter of charity is placed in water, observe;

That charity is accepted, and uncharitablenesse condemned in the smallest matter.

It is not the quantity of the gift, but the affection of the giver, it is not the quantity of that which is denyed to be given, but the heart of him that denyes it, which the Lord takes notice of: be it much or be it little that is given, if it be given with an honest and willing minde, the Lord accepts it, and be it much or be it little that is denyed, if it be denyed with a churlish and uncharitable spirit, the Lord is displeased with it: and the lesse that is which is denyed, the more sinfull is the denyal, and the more is the Lord displeased with it. When crusts or crums of bread, which fall from our Table, are denyed, when a cup of cold water is denyed, how cold is charity? and is it not

crumbled

crumbled into a leſſer nothing then thoſe crums? We ſhould honour the Lord with our ſubſtance, and our charity ſhould not onely have coſt in it, but liberality in it, how doe they honour God with their ſubſtance, who will hardly give to him (that is, to his poor) the ſhadow of their ſubſtance? If the Lord ſhould command us to give ſome great thing, to teſtifie our charity, ſhould we not doe it? how much more when he ſaith give but water to the weary for my ſake, and I account you charitable.

Secondly, Note;

That Churliſh and hard hearted Perſons ſtick at ſmall matters as well as at great.

It is ſuppoſed (*Acts* 5 15.) that the very ſhadow of *Peter* was healing to the ſicke. There are ſome ſo hard hearted, that they would hardly beſtow their ſhadow upon the poore to doe them good. It troubles them to part with the leaſt Imaginable Benefit, or to doe the leaſt Imaginable courteſie, not onely great things, but ſmall things, even the ſmalleſt things the chippings of their loafe, the parings of their apple, yea the very huskes which their ſwine eate (as the letter of the Parable concerning the prodigal intimates, *Luke* 15 16.) are ſtuck at as too much for them who have nothing. And thus the heart of a wicked man is ſtated to the whole buſineſſe of obedience; his heart is as much againſt obedience in a ſmall matter, as in a great, he is ſo farre from ſwallowing the camell of holy duty, that he ſtraines at the very gnats of it: and if a mans ſpirit be againſt obedience it ſelfe in its own nature, if his ſprit be unſutable to it, let it be a duty of the leaſt or loweſt degree, he cannot but ſtick at it. The ſervants of *Naaman* the *Aſſyrian* ſaid to him; *Had the Prophet bid thee doe ſome great matter, wouldeſt thou not have done it? how much more when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh in Jordan and be cleane.* There is a reaſon why we ſhould rather doe ſmall things then great as to the outward act, but, I ſay, if the ſpirit of a man be croſſe-grayn'd and lye againſt the duty, he is as unfit and as back-ward to doe a little as to doe a great deale; he will not ſo much as give water to God or man, or if he doe give it, he doth not give it with a heart let out in love to God, or in compaſſion to the moſt needy man. It is a hard matter with him to give or doe at all, but it is an impoſſible

impoſſible matter for him to give or do with a ready or chearfull mind. Thus the covetous man, the hard-hearted worldling cannot give ſo much as water: a worldly man never thinks that himſelfe hath enough of the world, and he never thinks that others have too little, when he is full he thinks all others are full enough too. Such narrow hearted creatures the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes (*Ch.* 32.6,7.) who as they *practice hypocriſie and utter error againſt the Lord*, ſo they practice oppreſſion and utter cruelty againſt man, *to make empty the ſoule of the hungry, and to cauſe the drinke of the thirſty to fayle. The Inſtruments of the Churle are evill.* What Inſtruments doth he meane? Some ſay, the inſtruments of his commerce, his weights and meaſures, he pincheth the poor there, that's true, thoſe inſtruments of the churliſh Merchant or Tradesman are evill. Yet we may rather expound it more largely for all the meanes, whether perſons or things, whether agents and under-officers, or courſes and devices, which the churliſh man uſeth as inſtruments to compaſſe and bring about his purpoſes; all theſe ſavour of himſelfe, they are evill, that is, falſe, treacherous, and lying in waite to deceive. For (as it followes) *He deviſeth wicked devices to deſtroy the poore with lying words, even when the needy ſpeaketh right*, or (as we put in the margin) *when he ſpeaketh againſt the poor in Judgment.*

Thirdly, Note;

That a little is much reckoned upon by thoſe that are in need, or have nothing.

Water is a welcome mercy to the thirſty, to the weary, to thoſe who are ready to dye with heate and travell. The rich man in hell would have been glad of a drop of water to coole his tongue. *Sicera* the Generall of *Jabins* Army, beggs of *Jael*, to give him a little water, for (ſaith he) *I am thirſty.* (Judg. 4. 19.) The full ſoule loaths the honey-combe, that which is ſweet and delicious the full ſtomack loathes it, but they that are weary, hungry and thirſty, a piece of bread, a Cup of water, how pleaſant! how ſweet! Such are glad of any thing, who are in want of all things. Much is little to them who have much, a little is much to them who have but little. The weary will thanke you more for water, then the wanton will for

wine. The weary asked but for water to drinke and could not get it, thou wouldeſt not give it.

Fourthly, *Eliphaz* deſcribing a wicked man, fixes moſt upon this ſinne, his unmercifulneſſe to the poore. And there is a generall truth in it.

That to be without compaſſion to the poore, is the marke of a wicked man.

They who have found the compaſſion of God to their own ſoules (as every godly man hath) cannot ſhut up the bowels of their compaſſion towards the pined body of man. The Apoſtle *John* puts the queſtion (1 *Ep.* 3. 17.) *How dwelleth the love of God in him*, that doth ſo? The love of God, either as taken for the love of God to us, or for our love to God, dwelleth not in him, in whom there dwells no love to man. Now, if the love of God dwell not in a man, God dwelleth not in him, and if God dwell not in him, Satan doth; and what can he be called but *wicked*, in whom *the wicked*, or *the evill one* dwelleth? Thus the wicked *Edomites* dealt with the people of God, when they were wearied in their March thorow the Wilderneſſe. We read the children of *Iſrael* thus beſpeaking the *Edomites* (*Numb.* 20. 17, 18, 19.) *Let us paſſe I pray thee thorow thy Country, we will not paſſe thorow the fields, or thorow the vineyards, neither will we drinke of the water of the wells*, &c. we will put you to no trouble, no charge, we will be content with the common waters which we find abroad, this is all that we deſire when we ſhall be weary and thirſty in our travels. And *Edom* ſaid unto him, *Thou ſhalt not paſſe by me, leaſt I cut thee off with the ſword: And the Children of Iſrael ſaid unto him, we will goe by the high way, and if I and my Cattel drinke of thy water, I will pay thee for it, I will only* (without doing any thing elſe) *goe thorow on my feete.* See what a ſpirit *Edom* was of; when *Iſrael* put it to the loweſt, we will drinke none of the water of your wells, or if we doe we will pay for it; No, *Edom* was ſo hard-hearted, that he would neither give, nor ſell them water; they ſhall not have it either of free coſt, or for money; thus uncompaſſionate was he towards a People that were travelling, that were weary and thirſty. The Inhabitants of *Teman* are commended for their tenderneſſe to men in diſtreſſe (*Iſa.* 21. 14.) *They brought water to him that was thirſty, they prevented with their bread him that fled*; They gave water and bread unasked; The wants of the diſtreſſed moved them, though they made no motion for the ſupply of their wants. They act moſt like God who prevents us with their favours. Even the light of nature leads to it. How unnaturall then are they who deny water to them who being weary and thirſty begge for it! The mercy of God by Jeſus Chriſt is highly Commended to us upon this Conſideration, that he gives it not only in bounty, but in Compaſſion, there is not only liberality, but there is a pity in it: therefore he ſaith (*Matth.* 11. 28.) *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* To give eaſe and refreſhment to thoſe that are weary and heavy laden, hath not only bounty and liberalrty, but pity and Compaſſion in it. (*Pſal.* 136. 23.) *Thanks to God who hath remembred us in our low Eſtate.* It is an act of grace for God to remember us in our higheſt Eſtate, in our moſt flouriſhing eſtate, but to remember us in our low Eſtate, then to give us in refreſhings and comforts, this is a clearer act of Grace. As it is ſaid (*Pſal* 68. 9.) *Thou O God, dideſt ſend a plentifull rain, whereby thou diſt confirm thine inheritance when it was weary.* As the goodneſſe of God is moſt ſeene in giving water to the weary, ſo is the wickedneſſe of man in denying it. *Eliphaz* urgeth *Job* further with this uncharitablenes.

14.

And thou haſt with-holden bread from the hungry.

He gave no water, and he *with-held bread*. The word is ſometimes rendred *to hide*, *to deny*, and ſometimes to *deceive* a man of that which is due to him. Our tranſlation (*Thou haſt with-holden*) carries that ſence in it; Properly we are ſaid to with-hold onely that from a man which he hath a right to; *Thou haſt with-holden bread from the hungry.* As hunger and thirſt are put for all manner of Extreamity; ſo bread and water are put for all manner of ſupplyes generally. The Greekes and ſome Latines Interpret this ſtrictly of a morſell of bread, *Thou haſt with-holden a morſell of bread*, as the rich man in the Goſpel did, *Lazarus* deſired but the crummes that fell from his Table, but could not get them. So here, thou haſt with-holden not only a full Table, but a morſell of Bread; This latter clauſe and

Verbum מנע *ſignificat, abſondere, negare, fraudare. Subtrahebas ei ſi habebat, & prohibebas ſi non habebat, nolebas ei panem dare.* Deus. *Eſurientium ſubtraxiſti fructum panis.* Ambr.

the former are of the same sence, yet from that word *with-holden*, which implyeth a wrong done to the poore, note first;

That the poor have a right in what rich men have.

And if they with-hold all from them, they shall be condemned, not only as uncharitable and illiberall, but as oppressors and unjust; not only as not having given them relieſe, but as not having done them right. (*Prov.* 3. 27.) *With-hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to doe it.* A thing is due upon a double account; first, by the Law of Justice; secondly, by the Law of Love: I conceive here that the Proverbe is to be understood here of a dueneſſe, not by the Lawes of Common Justice (as if a man have his brothers Estate in his hand, he cannot with-hold it from him without transgressing the Law of Justice) but of a dueneſs by the Law of Love, o more strictly by the Law of Charity: thus 'tis a duty to doe good to those that are in want; it is not onely a favour that we shew to them when we relieve them, but there is a duty in it which we owe to God, who hath commanded that their poverty should be supplyed by the plenty and abundance which he hath given to others. If therefore it be demanded, who are they to whom this doing of good is due? I answer, not only they to whom thou art endebted in Justice, *witnes thy hand and seale*; but even they two whom thou art endebted in charity, *witneſſe their want and need.* The poore have a right to what we are able to give, and can conveniently spare; yea sometimes their right may ly somewhat beyond the line of our conveniency. So then there is a poynt of justice in it, as well as of charity in relieving the poore; and if (as the next words in *Solomon* imply) it be sinfull to delay them till to morrow, it must needs be a wickednes to deny them for ever. Therefore the same *Solomon* (*Prov.* 22. 2.) speaking of the poore and the rich puts them together; *The rich and poore meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all*; Now the Lord is the maker of the poore and of the rich, not only in their naturall constitution, as they are men consisting of body and soule, (so indeed he hath made the poore as well as the rich, and they are both alike the worke of his hands) but the Lord is the maker of them in that

that capacity or state wherein they are, he makes the rich man and the poore man, that is, he makes the one rich, and the other poore, he is the maker of them both. and *Solomon* (I conceive) puts that into shew first, that poor men should not envy the rich man, why? for the Lord hath made him rich; why should thine Eye be evill, because the Lords Eye is good?

And againe, that the rich man should not despise the poore, or with-draw the bowels of his compassion from them, the Lord could have made the poore too if he had pleased, therefore be Compassionate towards them, for the Lord is the Maker of you both. And this answers that objection commonly given by some, why, are not my goods my own, may I not doe with them as I please? I have not stolne them, I have wronged no man in the obtaining them; it is well when men can say thus, that they have done no wrong in getting riches: but this is no argument (how justly soever any man hath got his Estate) that he should keepe it all to himselfe, and not give a portion to those that are in want. The rich man with-holds what is due to the poore, when he with-holds relieſe from them. It is true your Estate is your own, it is yours, no man can challenge or claime it from you; I, but God can claime it from you; you are possessors and masters of your Estate in reference unto men, but you are but Stewards and Servants of your Estate in reference unto God. Now a Stewards businesse (you know) is not only to receive and lay up the Estate of his Lord or Master, but 'tis his businesse also to pay or lay out according as he receives command or order from his Lord; thus it is in this Case; Rich men are but Stewards to the Lord in reference to all that they have: Therefore as they receive from him, and partake of the fulneſſe of the Earth which is his (for the Earth is the Lords and the fullneſſe thereof) so they must issue it according to his order and command: Now he hath left a standing order for all times, that the rich should distribute to the necessities of the poore and hungry. Rich men must not thinke themselves Stewards only to receive in, but also to pay out what their Lord calls for, and therefore as they would give a good account of their Stewardship at the great Audit day, let them take heed how they *with-hold bread from the hungry*. I might shew further, that the rich are not only obliged to give, or that

that it is their duty to give, but that they ought to give chearfully and readily, not upon constraint (2 *Cor.* 9. 7.) that they ought to give liberally and bountifully, not with restraint, and that they ought to give sincerely, not thinking thereby either to merit at the hand of God, or to get the praise of men.

Secondly, From the matter of this charge, *Thou hast with-holden bread from the hungry*, we may observe, That

Not to doe good, or the omission of doing good to the poore, renders us culpable as well as the doing or Commission of that which is evill or injurious to them.

Not to relieve the poor is a sin as well as to injury or oppresse the poor, yea not to relieve hath injury and oppression in it. The reason of it is cleare from the former poynt, because the poore have a right to so much of a rich mans estate as is a reliefe of their pressing necessities, to preserve them from perishing And every man must acknowledge that to deny any man his right (by what title soever that right ariseth) is to oppresse him. Nor is it enough to give them good words (which yet is more then some will give) unlesse we doe them good (*Jam.* 2. 15, 16.) *If a Brother or a Sister be naked, and destitute of dayly food, and one of you say unto them depart in peace, be warmed and filled yet notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?* Though you give them good words, yet if you give them no supply, what doth it profit? We may understand it two waves.

First, What doth it profit the poor? Can they feed upon your good words? or will your good words cloath them? what doth it profit them if ye say be fed and be cloathed, if you give them neither food nor rayment.

Secondly, What profit is it to you who say so? will God take it well at your hands, that you have spoken kindly to the poore, when you did them no kindnesse? therefore with-hold not thy hand, &c. And if it be so great a sin to with-hold our bread from the hungry, what is it to take their bread from them? *Eliphaz* having thus taxed *Job* with neglect of the poore, he proceeds in the next verse to taxe him with an undue and partiall respect to the rich. As he was rigid to them who had nothing, so he was indulgent to those who had enough, if not more then enough, before.

Vers. 8. *But as for the mighty man he had the Earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it.*

There is a twofold Interpretation of these words: Some understand them so, as if *this mighty man here meant had been Job himselfe*, and then the sence is thus rendred; *All these evills were done by thee, and these good things not done, when thou wast a man in power, and so hadst no need to doe any such evill, and hadst power enough in thy hand to doe good.* The Vulgar translation reads it (according to this Exposition) personally of *Job*; *In thy might thou didst possesse the Earth, and being most powerfull thou didst dwell in it.* That is, thou wast a man in power, thou hadst all in thy hand, thou hadst water and bread enough when the poore wanted it, thou canst not say that thou wast necessitated to keepe the pledge, or strip the naked, but thou in thy greatnesse and might didst oppresse them; this interpretation (though I assent not to it) aggravates his sin exceedingly, for *the more power any one hath in his hand, the greater is his sin, as in the Evill which he doth, so in the good which he doth not, or leaves undone*; yea it may be sayd that we doe evill more then they who doe it, when we have power in our hand to hinder them from doing it, and doe not.

In fortitudine brachij tui possidebas terram et potentissimus obtinebas eam. Vulg.

But secondly, take the words as they import the partiality of *Job*; *The mighty man had the earth*; thou hast been over-kinde and favourable to him, how hard or churlish soever thou hast been to others.

The mighty man.

The Hebrew is, *The man of arme*; and it is usuall in Scripture to call a strong man a mighty man, or a man in authority, *a man of arme.* (*Ezek* 22. 6.) *Behold the Princes of Israel Every one of them were in thee to their power to shed bloud*, The Hebrew is, *they were to their arme*; that is, as farre as they could reach forth their arme, or to the utmost of their power to shed bloud, that is, to doe mischiefe and wrong, to affl&t and vexe others even unto death, or the shedding of their bloud. They who are evill know not how to bound themselves in doing evill;

Vir brachij, est vir dignitate, opibus authoritate potens. Bold.

evill; if they want not power, they seldome want will to doe it more and more. Thus the Prophet reproves that perverse generation; *Behold thou hast spoken and done evill as thou couldest* (Jer. 3. 5.) That is, to the utmost Extention of thy ability and opportunity. As those princes *shed bloud to their arme*, or as farre as they could reach out their power; So did this people; And as the power of man, so the power of God is expreſt by this arme (*Job* 40. 9) *Hast thou an arme like God? Canst thou thunder like him?* That is, hast thou power like God? (*Esa.* 30. 30.) *The Lord shall cause his glorious voyce to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arme, with the Indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire*; The revenging power of God, like a bird of prey, hovers over the heads of wicked men, but at last it lights down, and (as the word rather signifies) rests upon them.

Againe, Some understand here by the *arme* of the wicked man, those who are his Instruments, those who serve him, or whom he uses to supplant or suppresse others, and reach his own ends by; Such may well be called the armes of mighty men, the armes of the men of the Earth. Evil men have their seconds or Instruments to doe evill. Upon this Consideration it was said anciently; *Doe not you know that Princes have long armes*; the meaning is, they have Agents and Servants in the severall parts of their Dominions, who are their hands or armes, both for protection of those who are peaceable, and to take revenge upon the rebellious. We commonly say of a Servant that is discreet and faithfull, he is his *Masters right hand*. The mighty have many helpers, many armes and hands to carry on their designes, and to doe their wills.

An nescis longas regibus esse manus?

As for the mighty man, or the man of arme, he had the Earth.

This stands in opposition to what was spoken before, the poore man could not get a drop of water, nor a cruſt of bread, but the mighty man he had the Earth; As if he had said; *O Job, thou being in power didst passe away great possessions to the mighty, thou gavest both thy sentence and assistance, that they should have the Earth, but thou wouldest not helpe the poor so much as to a piece of bread, or a cup of water; The mighty man had the Earth*; he speakes Indefinitely, as if all the Earth were his. Wicked men are

are called *men of the Earth* (*Ps.* 10. 18.) *To judge the fatherless, and the oppressed, that the men of the Earth may no more oppresse.*

But it may be objected, Is not every man a man of the Earth? As *Adam the first man was of the Earth, Earthy*; so all men are of the Earth, Earthy; why then is it then said of a wicked man, that he is a man of the Earth, as if any man were of another Pedigree or extraction?

I answer; A man of the Earth is put in opposition to a man of Heaven, to a man that hath his Estate, or hope, or portion in Heaven; the Saints have their Conversation in Heaven, and though they live upon the Earth, yet they are not men of the Earth; Carnall men are Earthly minded, they minde the Earth, and thats both their hope and business; they are not only Earth in their Constitution, but Earth in their affections, therefore they are called men of the Earth; these men had much of the Earth in their possession, as well as they had all of it in their affections and desires. *The mighty man he had the earth.*

Observe hence;

That Evill Magistrates in Power are more ready to favour great men, then to releive poore men.

Eliphaz knew that *Job* was a Magistrate, a man in Power, and he supposeth that under his government, the poore got no bread, but the mighty men had the Earth, they had favour to have and doe what they list. It is very Common with the men of the world to be very free to those that are of the world; they are like those Clouds which we may observe sometimes blown over the dry Land, and emptying themselves into the Sea. The mighty that had store before, have more, and the poore, who had nothing, have nothing at all; Men love to bestow kindnesses upon them onely to whom they are like, or whom they love. A good man helps those that are good, and wicked men care for none but such as themselves. Wicked men are called *Oakes* (*Zech.* 11. 2.) *Howle ye firr trees for the Cedar is fallen*, (that is, the great man is fallen) *because all the mighty are spoyled; howl O ye Oaks of Bashan, for the forrest of the vintage is come downe.* The Chaldee Paraphrase saith, *Howle ye Governors of Provinces*: And he calls these Governors, Oakes; first,

firſt, becauſe of their ſtrength; and, ſecondly, becauſe of their fruit. What fruit doe Oakes beare? onely acornes; and who are fed with acornes? onely ſwine; Acornes are but hoggs meate; he gives the alluſion thus; wicked men in power, beare fruit, but it is onely for ſwine, that is, for wicked men, they beſtow the tokens of their bounty, the overplus of their plenty, upon hoggs and ſwine, that is, upon carnal and ſenſuall men, they have nothing for the People of God, for thoſe that are the true objects of charity; they make their horſes fat, their doggs fat, none are leane but Gods poore. Thus one of the Ancients reprehends thoſe great ones of his time; *Te cloath the walles of your houſes with gold, with Arras hangings, and ye let the poore goe naked; the poore aske bread, and ye give it them not; it may be your horſe chewes a Golden Bitt, and the poore man hath not a Bitt of Bread.* The ſpirits of carnall men are carried out from that which is their duty, they care not how profuſe and laviſh they are to thoſe who ſuits with their own hearts; the poore have nothing, while the mighty man hath the Earth. Thus *Eliphaz* reproved *Job*, though indeed it was otherwiſe with him, as appeares in the defence which he afterwards made for himſelfe againſt theſe groſſe inſinuations. And as to this particular he anſwers (*Chap.* 29. 17.) *I brake the Jawes of the wicked, and pluckt the ſpoyle from between his teeth*; he indeed pull'd the earth from the mighty, or the mighty from the earth; though *Eliphaz* here ſayd, *The mighty had the earth*, and

Parietes veſtites auro, homines veſte nudatis? panem poſtulat homo, & equus tuus avenam ſub dentibus mandit. Ambroſ.

The honourable man dwelt in it.

Acceptus vel elevatus facie habitabat in ea. Heb.

The Hebrew is, *The man whoſe face is lifted up*; which phraſe is Interpreted two wayes.

Hebræi principem vocant Niſi quaſi elevatũ facie & ab alijs acceptum.

Firſt, Paſſively; Secondly, Actively. Paſſively thus, the man who is lifted up by others, that is, who is reſpected, who is reverenced according to his place or worth: All which agree with our rendering, *the honourable man*; And in the Hebrew, Princes and great ones are expreſt by that word which ſignifies to *lift up the face*, becauſe ſuch are lifted up above others, and are much reſpected by others. So the word is uſed (*Gen.* 19. 21.) *See* (ſaith the Angel to *Lot*) *I have accepted thee*; The Hebrew is, *I have lifted up thy face*, that is, I have reſpected and honoured thee by granting thy requeſt.

Secondly,

Secondly, It may be taken actively, *The man that lifts up the face dwells in the Earth*; What is it to lift up the face? it is to Accept Perſons in Judgement, to accept him that hath the worſt cauſe, and to reject him that hath the beſt cauſe for private ends. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid; *He that reſpects perſons, that is, who perverts juſtice, he hath the Earth*; and ſo here ſeems to be a deſcription of all ſorts of wicked men flouriſhing in *Jobs* time and under his wing. Some oppreſſe openly; the mighty man, the man of armes comes by main force and obtains the earth, or the riches and fatnes of the earth; Others oppreſſe ſecretly and cunningly, they accept perſons, and are byaſſed in Judgement by their own intereſt and advantages; The man of this ſtrain *dwelt in it.*

Acceptor perſonarum habitabat in ea. Pagn.

προσωποληψια eſt habere reſpectum perſonarum ſequendo pauper ſit aut dives aut nobilis aut honoratus.

The word notes two things. Firſt, *to continue*, he dwelt there, thou let'ſt him abide, whereas if he had come into the Land thou ſhould'ſt quickly have rooted him out. Secondly, The word ſignifies not onely to dwell but to ſit, and to ſit, in Scripture Language notes authority or dominion, he *dwelt or ſate in it*, that is, he was the man in authority, he had the power, and the great places of government were entruſted in his hand. From both theſe obſerve;

יִשַּׁב *Habitavit ſedere.*

Firſt, *That evill Magiſtrates are apt to pervert Juſtice, in favour of thoſe who are great in power.*

Favour ſhould be ſhewed according to the Juſtnes of mens cauſes, and not according to the greatneſſe of their perſons. But uſually the mighty men have the Earth, all goes on their ſide, and the honourable man dwels there, he ſits ſafe and quiet, well and warme. This is ſo commonly ſeene, that 'tis become a Proverb, *The mighty man hath the whole earth for his houſe to dwell in; the poore man lyes every where, but ſeldome dwels any where.* The wicked are ſaid to have their portion in this life, they would have the Earth to themſelves, and they ſhall have nothing but Earth. So the Prophet deſcribes them (*Eſay* 5. 8.) *Woe unto them that joyne houſe to houſe, that lay field to field, that there may be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midſt of the Earth.* Man is naturally a ſociable Creature, and it may ſeem ſtrange that he ſhould deſire to be alone in the midſt of the Earth: Therefore by his deſire to be alone, we muſt not

Potentis eſt terras; pauper ubiq; jacet.

underſtand a ſtrict loneneſs, or ſolitarineſs, as if rich men had a minde to live alone, ſo as to have none about them or with them, but the meaning is, they would have none in power but themſelves, none in poſſeſſion but themſelves; they are unwilling that any ſhould have an eſtate but themſelves, they would have all others to be their underlings and tenants, their ſervants, and villaines to till their ground and gather in their revenewes, they only would be Freeholders, all others muſt hold by their Copy, and doe them homage. If the greateſt man in the world were turned alone into the world, he would have but an ill being of it, therefore the meaning of the Prophet is, that they would be placed alone in the midſt of the Earth to command and rule, all others muſt ſerve them. And they whoſe pride, ambition, or covetouſneſſe provokes them to dwell thus alone in the earth, ſhall finde nothing, beyond this earth, but fire to dwell in.

Secondly, Obſerve this;

That for a Magiſtrate to favour men becauſe of their greatneſſe and power, is an utter departure from his duty.

The poor man ſhould have the Earth, that belongs to him, as well as the rich. The mean mans right to his little is as good, as the mighty mans to his great deal. Juſtice gives every man his owne, without reſpect to the Owner.

Thirdly, Conſider the words as a charge brought againſt *Job*, he being a man in Authority, and in place.

Then, Note;

He that lets wicked men oppreſſe or wrong others, when he is inveſted and entruſted with power to hinder them, betrayeth his truſt, and looſeth the ends of his inveſtiture.

The Lord chargeth *Eli* (1 *Sam.* 3. 13.) becauſe of the great Iniquity which his Sons committed; but it might be ſaid, What was their ſin to him? Yes; it lay in his power to hinder them; for *Eli* was the chief Magiſtrate in *Iſrael*, and therefore the Lord concluded; *I will Judge his houſe for ever, for the Iniquity which he knoweth, becauſe his Sons made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not*; But did not *Eli* reſtraine them? there is a reſtraining: Firſt,

Firſt, by way of Councell and advice; and in this ſenſe *Eli* did reſtraine them (*Chap.* 2. 23, 24.) *He ſaid unto them, why doe ye ſuch things, for I hear of your evill dealings with all the people; nay my Sonnes, for it is no good report that I hear; ye make the Lords people to tranſgreſſe.* Thus he put a morall ſtopp in their way, ſhewing the hainouſneſſe of their ſinne, and dehorting them from it; but *Eli* being a man in Power and Authority, might have gone another way to work with them, he might have puniſhed them for their ſin. And becauſe he did not, here was *Elies* ſin; and this is ſuggeſted as *Jobs* ſin, He was a man in Power, yet he winked at thoſe violent ones, and let them carry all in the Earth, when as he might have mended the matter, by checking their inſolencies, & doing the poor right. This is charged on *Thiatira* in reference to the neglect of uſing their Church-power, (*Revel* 2. 20.) *Notwithſtanding I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman Jezabell, that Calls her ſelf a Propheteſſe, to teach, and to ſeduce my Servants to commit fornication*, &c. That Angel ſuffer'd her; how did he ſuffer her? he did not uſe that Power that Chriſt had Committed to the Church, to admoniſh, to reprove, to caſt out, he did not ſtop that ſeducing Propheteſſe by a due Exerciſe of Spirituall Power, but ſuffer'd her to ſeduce uncontrol'd. The more Power we have to prevent or remove either Spirituall or civill Evills, the greater is our ſinne when it is not done: if *Eliphaz* had not ſuppoſed *Job* a Magiſtrate, he could not have layd this burden upon him, or have repreſented him in fault, becauſe the mighty man had the Earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it, oppreſſing the weak, and vexing thoſe of low degree.

Eliphaz goes yet one ſtep further in the proſecution of this charge, and arraignes him for another Crime, and that a very great one; *The mighty man had the Earth, the honourable man dwells in it*; But

Verſ. 9. *The widow thou haſt ſent empty away, and the arms of the fatherleſſe have been broken.*

As if he had ſaid; Thou didſt fill the full with good things, but the hungry thou haſt ſent empty away; The honourable have been provided for, but they who were deſtitute of all friends,

friends, found no friendship at thy hands, unlesse the breaking of their own armes.

Thou hast sent widows away empty.

שלח *verbum dimittendi violentiam quandam affert, ut sit idem quod eijcere extrudere, expellere?*

There is somewhat considerable in the nature of the word, which we render *sent*; for it implyes a putting away with a kind of violence; thou hast cast them out, or bid them be packing; thou hast put them off with rigour and distaste. As if he had said, *Thou hast not onely let them go from thy house unreleeved, but thou hast reviled them and thrust them away because they asked reliefe.* So we may expound it by that (*Gen.* 3. 23, 24.) *And the Lord God sent him* (that is, *Adam*) *forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.* What this sending forth was, is expressed in the next verse' *So he drove out the man.* Such a sending away is here intended, thou hast sent widows away (as we speak) with a witnesse; thou hast chide or rated them out of thy presence. As it is said of *Gallio* (*Acts* 18 16, 17) *That he cared for none of those things, and he drave them from the Judgement-seate.* Thus thou hast sent widows away.

Complutenses

Further in the Chaldee Language; the word signifies to stripe, or to pluck off the very skinne. This is yet more tyrannicall, Thou hast sent them away spoyled and stript, or as it followeth in the Text, *empty. Thou hast sent widowes away*, &c. It was not the *mighty man*, nor the *great ones* of the earth, that he is charged to deale thus unkindly or rather cruelly with, but the *widow*; that hightens the sinfulnesse of his tyranny. This very word by which a widow is expressed in the Hebrew, as well as her condition, calls for helpe and pitty. It comes from a roote that signifies; either to *binde*, or to be *silent*; taking it, in the first signification, *to binde*, the widdow may be so called for two reasons. First, because the widow is (as it were) bound about with afflictions, and sorrowes, she hath many troubles about her, as so many bonds, from which she cannot free her selfe without running into many other troubles. Secondly, The widow is so called, by the rule of contrary speaking; bound, that is, *not at all bound*, but free or loosed from her husband. Thus the Apostle speaks (*Rom.* 7. 1, 2, 3. 1 *Cor.* 7. 39.) her marriage knot is untyed by death; *If her husband be dead, she*

אלטנה *a verbo* אלם *quod est colligare, ergo ligata dicitur per contrarium intellectum quia jam soluta viro Significat etiã habere linguam colligatam, i.e. obmutescere aut mutũ esse, quòd mortuo viro non valeat loqui & litigare, quamvis contra aquũ & jus rapinam bonorum suorum patiatur.* Rab: Moth.

she is loosed from the Law of her husband, she is left to her selfe, and her owne dispose alone. Take the word in the second signification, *to be silent*; A widow is so called because she seldome hath that naturall, and never hath that civill liberty or freedome of speech, which her husband had, and therefore she needs others to speake for her, or must speake her minde by others; her selfe being either unable, or disabled to speake in her owne case, or to speake for her selfe. This being the widows state, he hath the greater sinne who deales unkindly with her. What? Thrust away the widow, whose heart is bound about, yea and thrust thorough with many sorrowes; What? thrust away the widow, who is unable to mannage her owne cause, and defend her selfe in her right? yet this thou hast done. *Thou hast sent widows away.*

Empty.

That is, without any helpe or comfort. The word is used to signifie the emptinesse of a vessell (2 *King.* 4. 4) It is used also concerning the Dreamer; who thinks that he hath eaten, but when he awakes *his soule*, (that is, his stomacke) *is empty* (*Isai.* 9. 8.) So we may expound the word *Racha* (*Mat.* 5. 22.) *He that saith to his brother Racha*; which some understand, not of a man that wants wit or honesty onely, but wealth or plenty. And then to call a man *Racha*, is to upbraid him both with poverty and simplicity. As if it should (in disgrace) be sayd to him; *Thou poor snake, thou silly fellow, what dost thou talke, thou who hast so little wit, thou that art not worth a groat?* In the Story of *Jephthah* (*Judg.* 11. 3) such a sort of men are spoken of as his ayders and assistants; *Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and there were gathered together vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.* Some translate, *poor men were gathered together, and went out with him. Vaine men*, are usually idle fellows and vagabonds; and we may conceive his company or followers to have consisted of poor men rather then of vaine men. And in that sense the word is used (*Neh* 5. 13.) *Even thus be he shaken out and emptyed*; That is, impoverish'd and reduced to nothing. And thus also the low estate of Jesus Christ is expressed (*Phil.* 2.) *He emptyed himselfe*, namely, of his divine glory and splendour; that is, he shew'd not his Majesty whilest he was in the flesh, but covered and vailed it, and was in appearance

A radice רוק *quod est effundere vel evacuare.*

Erat ergo contumeliosũ verbum discere fratri Raka i.e. Vocare pauperculam & bonis omnibus exhaustum.

Heb: Vacui. *non ut putat Vatablus*, Otiosi *sed, ut alij inopes & bonis exhausti.*

pearance as a poore empty man, having voluntarily made himselfe of no reputation, though he were Lord over all. Such was the emptiness, in which these widows were sent away by *Job*, as *Eliphaz* accuseth him. And this act may have a threefold interpretation. First, they were sent away *empty*; that is, not filled or releived by thy charity; thou didst not open, eyther thy heart or thy hand to supply their necessities, or to make them up in what they wanted, and humbly desired.

Secondly, *Thou hast sent widows empty away*; That is, thou hast given them no reliefe by thy Justice; some widows beg meerly for our Almes, others bring their case and cause to the Magistrate or man in Authority, for helpe against their oppressing adversaries. In the 18th of *Luke*, the importunate widow, saith to the Judge, *Releive me against my adversary*; I beg not your charity, but your justice; The widow is sent away empty, when her suite is not heard. We may understand *Eliphaz* eyther way, that when the widow sued for her right, she found no Justice; and when she came for an almes she found no charity.

Thirdly, We may interpret it yet higher; *Thou hast sent widowes away empty*; That is, widows came to thee full or in a good condition, but thou hast emptyed them by oppression, and taken away what they had. Covetous Magistrates care not how or of whom they get it, so they can get it; They empty the widows purse, yea widows houses to fill their owne. Christ reproved the *Pharisees* for this (*Mat.* 23. 14.) *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees for ye devoure widows houses*; ye eate them out of house and home, eyther by living upon them, or by taking away their livings. We may understand *Eliphaz* in this sense also; *Thou hast sent widows away empty*; that is, widows came to thee for protection, and thou didst promise it, but then to make thy owne market upon them and serve thy selfe, thou hast oppressed them, they came to thee to doe them right, and thou hast undone them by unrighteousnesse. It is ill enough to deny widows charity, it is worse to deny them Justice, but it is worst of all to undoe them by unjustice; yet those two Horse leaches, pride and covetousnesse will not forbeare to draw from the widow. Some rich men undertake the widows cause, onely to enrich themselves by the spoyles of the

Tradunt se ad tuendum maioribus, deditias se divitum faciunt. Illud grave est, quod hac lege tueri pauperes videntur ut spoliant; hac lege defendunt miseros ut miseriores faciant defendendo. Salvian. Lib. 5to de pro. v.d.

the widdow; and for this reason they promise helpe to those who are in misery, that they may make them more miserable, in stead of helping them, *Thou hast sent widows away empty*. Thus *Job* was supposed to have dealt with widows.

See next how *Eliphaz* chargeth him for his dealings with the fatherlesse.

And the armes of the fatherlesse have been broken.

These two desolate names are alwayes found alone, but often as one in Scripture; the widow who is disjoyn'd from her husband, and the fatherlesse, who are bereaved of their parents, are commonly joyned together. And these two names are taken in Scripture, either strictly, or more largely; strictly to signifie only such persons as have either lost their husbands or parents; Largely, and so the widow and fatherlesse, signifie any that are in distresse, or need our charity: Because the widow & the fatherlesse stand often in need of charity, therefore these names in Scripture, signifie any that need our charity. While the Prophet saith (*Hos.* 14. 3.) *With thee the fatherlesse findeth mercy*; We are not to straighten his sense only to orphans, but to any that are in distress; he that is a father may be called fatherless, and the child that hath a father may be called fatherless, when extreamly needing the help either of God or man. And so the word *widow* must be understood (*Rev.* 18. 7.) where *Babylon* boasteth, *I sit as a Queen, and am no widdow*; that is, I am neither friendlesse nor helplesse; or as the next words seem to expound it, *I shall see no sorrow*; which is usually the widows portion. Thus in the Text by the *widdow* and the *fatherles*, we must understand not only those who are formally so, but all in affliction, who are equivalently so.

Duo ista nomina in quantum despectui humano in tantum misere ordine divina exposita. Tertull. l. 1. ad uxor. c. 8. *Per viduam & pupillum omne genus miseriorum hominum significatur.* Phied.

The armes of the fatherlesse have been broken.

In the former part of the verse, he saith; *Thou hast sent the widow away empty*; charging the sinne personally upon *Job*; here he only saith; *The armes of the fatherlesse have been broken*; As if he did not place the fault directly upon him; yet some translate it so; *Thou hast broken the armes of the fatherlesse*, making it *Jobs* act; However our rendring layes fault enough upon

upon him, and leaves him in particular without excuse, while it speakes only in generall, *The armes of the fatherlesse have been broken.* For it is as if he had said; thou hast permitted their armes to be broken; And if he should object; what if the armes of the fatherlesse have been broken? what is that to me: Yes, you being in place and power, and having strength in your own hands to preserve the fatherlesse, if the armes of the fatherlesse have been broken, the sin must lye at your doore: *Every man is guilty of all the evill, which he hath power and a call to hinder, and doth not hinder.*

The armes of the fatherlesse.

Armes may be taken either properly, or figuratively; The arme properly is a noble and most usefull Limbe of the body, we are not to understand it so here, as if he had broken the naturall armes of their bodyes; A mans arme is broken when his power is broken, though his skin be not so much as toucht. So then,

Per brachia robur divitiæ, facultates quæ Orphano pro brachijs & manibus esse possunt intelliguntur.

By the armes of the fatherlesse, we are to understand whatsoever is the strength, or makes for the defence of the fatherlesse. *The arme* (as was toucht in the former verse) is put for strength, because the arme hath much strength and activity in it for the defence and use of the whole body. The estate, the friends, the kindred, all the meanes, helpes, and ayds which are subservient to the good and protection of the fatherlesse, are by a figure called the *Armes of the fatherlesse*; These armes, saith *Eliphaz*,

Have been broken.

רצא *confringere contundere.*
1 *Non subveniendo.*
2. *Detinendo subsidium ipsis a parentibus relictum.*

The word notes an utter breaking, a breaking to pieces; To break, as a thing is broken in a Morter with a pestle. This breaking may be also considered two wayes; either as done by a positive act, or by a negative act: that is, by with-holding that help which might preserve them from breaking. The armes of the fatherlesse are broken by denying them protection as well as by exercising oppression by them. Thus we see what a bill of inditement is here drawn up against *Job*, how he is charged with crimes, which are not only against the light of Scripture, but even against the very light of nature,

ture, even with those crimes which his hand was farre from, and his heart further from, with those crimes which he did not onely forbeare to practice, but which his soul did abhorre.

Hence observe;

That the most innocent persons, are often charged with the foulest and sinfullest crimes.

Job was so cleare in his own conscience from this accusation, that he not only professeth openly that he never did, but imprecates a like vengeance upon himselfe if ever he had done it (*Chap.* 31. 21.) *If I have lift up my hands against the fatherlesse, when I saw my helpe in the Gate,* (that is, when by reason of my great power and authority in the place of judgement I could easily enough have done it, no man daring to oppose or hinder me, but all rather being ready to countenance and assist me in it, if (I say) when I had these advantages over the fatherlesse, I did ever break their armes) *then let mine arme fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arme be broken from the bone*; As if he had said, if I have done this thing, let a divine and visible retaliation poynt me out for the man, let all the world see and reade my sinne in my punishment, and my injustice against man in the most discernable judgements of God upon my selfe. Thus free and innocent was *Job*, and yet thus accused. And indeed if to accuse were enough, there is no man in the world could be innocent or free. Who is there of so unspotted a conversation, that may not be spotted with accusation? who while his conscience is pure, may not have much dirt cast in his face?

Secondly, *Eliphaz* accuses *Job* of all this, not because he knew it to be so, but because he thought it was so. Whence note (which hath formerly been toucht at)

That to charge any man upon surmise with things that we cannot prove, is a high breach not only of charity but of justice.

The *Lord* reproves *Jobs* three friends in the last Chapter of this Booke, because they *had not spoken of him the thing that was right*; and as they had not spoken the thing that was right of God, so not of *Job*. They pitcht upon no reason why they con-

condemned him so much, but only because he indured so much. They concluded him a man of sinne, because he was a man of sorrow. The Apostle gives us the true genius of charity (1 *Cor.* 13. 3, 4.) *Charity beleeveth all things*; not that charity is so credulous as to take up every thing for truth which is scattered by any common and ungrounded report; that's no commendation in any man, much lesse is it the commendation of a godly man, therefore when the Apostle saith *Charity believeth all things*, the meaning is, Charity interprets every thing in the best sence which it will beare; and makes the faireſt construction which every mans case and condition will admit. And againe at the 5th verse; *Charity thinkes no evill*; that is, it thinkes no evill of others; As a godly man will not maintain evill thoughts, or suffer them to lodge within him, in reference to any sinne which himself is tempted to commit. So a charitable man will not maintaine or lodge evill thoughts of others, in reference to any sinne which he can only suppose that they have committed. Againe, as charity *thinkes no evill*, that is, it doth not plot evill against others; so thinks no evill, by a rash surmising it of others. Thus, *charity beleeves all's well, and thinkes no evill.* How uncharitable then are they, yea, how unjust who beleeves all's ill, where they know of none, and thinke the worst of them in whom they never saw any thing, but what was good? It is not enough for a man to say he doth not judge his brother maliciously, he ought not to judge him ignorantly. Though to speake or judge ill of another, because we wish him ill, be the greater sinne, yet barely to speak or judge ill of another, by whom we know no ill, is very sinfull: And then 'tis most sinfull, when we doe it not onely as not knowing any evill they have done, but because we know, heare, or see the evills which they suffer. 'Tis dangerous as well as improper to make the hardest and harshest dealings of God with any man, the ground of our hard and harsh thoughts of him.

Thirdly, Consider who they were whom *Job* is supposed to have oppressed; they were not the great ones, not the mighty men of the earth, but the fatherlesse, and the widow.

Whence note;

That the *poore are usually the subject of oppression.*

The

The greater fish in the sea of this world devour and live upon the lesser; The strong should support the weake, and they who are upper most should uphold those who are under them. But because the weak and the underlings may most easily be oppresst, therefore they are most usually oppresst. As covetousnesse is cruel, so 'tis cowardly, and dares not meddle with its match. God in reference to Spiritualls, *filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich he sendeth empty away*, (Luk. 1. 53.) Ungodly men in reference to temporalls, would send the rich away empty, if they could, but they are so farre from filling the hungry with good things, that they take away all the good things they can from the hungry, they care not if they starve the hungry, if they make the poore poorer, and take all from them who have but little.

Fourthly, *Job* having been a Magistrate, and so (by his place) a Minister of Justice, is strongly pressed with the doing of injustice.

Whence note;

First, *That they who have power, may easily, though not always justly, be suspected for the abuse of it.*

To have a power in our hands whereby we may doe good, is a temptation to do evill. 'Tis hard to keep power within its bounds, and to rule that, by which others are ruled. The Prophet (*Isa.* 1. 10.) calls the rulers of *Sion, rulers of Sodome*, because they ruled like them, or rather worse then they, eating up the people, under their charge, rather then feeding them, and vexing those whom they undertooke to governe, and to be a Shield unto against the vexations of others.

Secondly, Note;

That as oppression is a sin in any man, so it is most sinfull in those who have power in their hands to releeve the oppressed.

Such act not only contrary to a common rule, but contrary to their speciall duty; by how much we have the more obligation not to doe a thing, by so much we sin the more if we doe it.

Thirdly, Note;

That as it is very sinfull in Magistrates to wrong any man, so it is most sinfull to wrong them, or to deny them right, who have most need of it, the widow, and the fatherlesse.

Magi-

Magiſtrates are called Gods; And God who hath honoured them by putting his name upon them, expects that they ſhould honour him, by imitating or acting like unto him. What a Magiſtrate doth, he ſhould do like God, he ſhould doe it ſo that every one may be convinced that God is in him and with him of a truth. As God takes care of the widow, and of the fatherleſſe, ſo ſhould he. God is knowne by this Title; *A father of the fatherleſſe, and a Judge of the widow, is God in his holy habitation* (Pſal. 68. 5.) That is, in Heaven; for that's the habitation of his holineſſe, and of his glory, there he dwells, *Judging for the widow, and the fatherleſſe*; And as that is the ſpeciall buſineſſe (as it were) of God in Heaven, ſo they who are Gods on earth, ought to make it their ſpeciall buſineſſe to judge for the widow and the fatherleſſe. Hence we finde the widow and the fatherleſſe commended by name to the care of the Magiſtrate; The fatherleſſe have no naturall parents living, or none neere of kinne remaining to maintain and defend them, therefore the Magiſtrate, who is (*pater patriæ*) the common father of his Country, ſhould be their Foſter-Father. They who want powes are the Charge, and ſhould be the ſpecial care of thoſe in power. Thus they are commanded (*Pſa.* 82. 3, 4.) *Defend the poore and fatherleſſe, doe juſtice to the afflicted and needy, deliver the poore and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.* Here's their worke, and the neglect of this worke (how buſie ſoever Magiſtrates are about other worke) is often complained of aloud in Scripture, as a crying ſinne, as a ſinne that ruines Nations, and drawes down publicke Judgements upon a people. (*Iſaiah* 1. 17.) *Ceaſe to doe evill, learne to doe well, ſeeke Judgement, relieve the oppreſſed, Judge the fatherleſſe, plead for the widow*: And at the 23 verſe; *They judge not the fatherleſſe, neither doth the Cauſe of the widow come unto them.* Againe (*Jer.* 5. 28) *They judge not the cauſe of the fatherleſſe.* It is a ſin not to judge any mans Cauſe, not to judge the Cauſe of the richeſt, of the greateſt; yet it is more ſinfull not to judge the Cauſe of the widow and the fatherleſſe. And when he ſaith, *They judge not the Cauſe*, &c. the meaning is, they judge not the Cauſe of the fatherleſſe impartially and righteouſly. And indeed, he that doth not judge righteouſly, doth not judge at all; and when the Prophet ſaith, *They judge not the cauſe of the fatherleſſe,*

fatherleſſe, it is as if he had ſaid; *Among all the Cauſes that lye unjudged, this is the Cauſe, that God takes moſt notice of, and is moſt diſpleaſed with the neglect of it, even when the cauſe of the fatherleſs is not pleaded, or judged.* All are forward enough to plead the Cauſe of the rich; but when the Client is poore, and appeares (*in forma pauperis*) his cauſe ſeldome finds any but a poore and formal pleading. We read (*Acts* 6. 1.) That *there was a great murmuring of the Grecians againſt the Hebrewes, becauſe their widowes were neglected in the dayly adminiſtration.* Church Officers (in their capacity) as well as State-Officers (in theirs) ought to have a carefull eye upon widows that are in want. And the Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 1. 27.) ſummes up (as it were) all Religion into this one duty; *Pure religion and undefiled before God, and the father is this, to viſit the fatherleſs and the widow.* Not as if this were indeed all religion, or the *all* of religion: but as when the Spirit in Scripture, hath to doe with prophane perſons, or meere morall honeſt men, who place all religion in civill righteouſneſſe and workes of charity, then he calls them to firſt Table duties, or to the ſincere worſhip of God, ſo when the Spirit is ſpeaking to thoſe who place all their religion in worſhip, or in firſt Table duties, neglecting the duties of charity and righteouſneſſe, then we finde all religion placed in ſecond Table worke, in giving every man his due, in compaſſion to the poore, in helping the helpleſſe, in feeding the hungry, in cloathing the naked, in comforting the ſorrowfull, and by name the fatherleſſe and the widow. *This is pure religion to viſit the fatherleſs and the widow*, That is, this is the practicall part, or the true practice of Religion, without which all Religion is vaine; Therefore when the Apoſtle had ſaid (*v.* 21.) *Receive with meekneſs the engraffed word*: Leſt any man ſhould ſtay there, and thinke he had done enough when he had been a hearer, he adds, *Be doers of the word*; That is, looke to the practicall part of Religion, be diligent in the dutyes of love to men, as well as in thoſe of the worſhip of God.

Take theſe two inferences from the whole verſe.

Firſt Seeing God taketh ſo much care of the widow and the fatherleſſe, *Let the widow, let the fatherleſſe truſt in God.* They who receive peculiar promiſes from God, ſhould put forth ſuitable acts of faith towards God. Faith cannot worke without

out a word, and where it hath a word it ought to worke. We have both put together in the preſent caſe (*Jer.* 49. 11.) *Leave thy fatherleſſe children I will preſerve them alive, and let the widows truſt in me*: As if God had ſaid, if none will take care of them, I will, I will take care of them, I will be a father of the fatherleſſe, a husband to the widow, leave that care to me. Therefore let the widow and fatherleſſe truſt in God; A word from God is a better and a bigger portion, then all the wealth of this world.

Secondly, Seeing the Lord is ſo jealous over them, and ſo ready to take their part againſt all their adverſaries, this ſhould provoke them to be full of zeale for God; God ſtands up for their protection, therefore they ſhould ſtand up for God their protector and patron. How carefull ſhould they be to pleaſe him, who is ſo watchfull to preſerve them? Speciall promiſes call for ſpeciall obedience, as well as for ſpeciall faith; The more God engageth himſelfe to doe for us, the more ſhould we engage our ſelves (in his ſtrength) to doe for him; *None have more reaſon to be rich in faith and love to God, then the poor and fatherleſſe.*

Thus far we have examined the Inditement, or Charge which *Eliphaz* brought againſt *Job*; now ſee, what he inferres upon it, here is thy ſin, and there's thy puniſhment.

Job, Chap. 22. Verſ. 10, 11.

Therefore ſnares are round about thee, and ſudden fear troubleth thee;
Or darkneſſe that thou canſt not ſee, and abundance of waters cover thee.

These two verſes have variety of expreſſions, but the intendment of all is one and the ſame, *Snares and fears, and darkneſſe, and abundance of waters*, ſignifie all manner of evills; All theſe are upon thee, becauſe thou haſt ſent widows away empty, and haſt ſuffered the Armes of the fatherleſſe to be broken; becauſe thou haſt done theſe things, therefore

Snares are round about thee.

Some render the Originall Text to another ſenſe, not as bearing an effect of the former words, not as if he had been puniſhed with theſe evills for thoſe ſinnes, but as if theſe evills had cauſed him to ſinne; and ſo the words are expounded, as a kinde of ſcorne; as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *When thou didſt thoſe things, no doubt ſnares, or feares, or darknes, or waters came upon thee, thou was forc't by ſuffering theſe evills, to doe all this evill, waſt thou not? was it not becauſe thou waſt preſt with ſnares and feares and darknes and waters, that thou didſt oppreſſe the widow and the fatherleſſe?* All which Queſtions are reducible to theſe plain Negations. *Thou waſt not preſſed with any of theſe perplexities upon thy ſelfe, to oppreſſe the poore; there was no ſnare, no nor any feare neer thee, darkneſſe did not hinder thy ſight, nor did the waters of affliction cover thee; Thou haſt not been thruſt upon ſin by theſe temptations, nor conſtrained by the moral violence of any incumbent neceſſity, but haſt done it freely, to ſin even in this manner and at this hight, hath not been thy refuge, but thy choyce; Thou haſt not acted theſe iniquities by any inſtigation either from perſons or providences, but upon thine own election.* This is a fayre ſence and a mighty reproofe; ſeeing (as was lately noted) every evill we doe is by ſo much the worſe, by how much we have had the leſſe provocation, or ſolicitation to doe it.

עַל בֵּן *non ſignificat illationem aut convenientiam conſequentis ad antecedens ſed conſequentiam aptitudinemque antecedentis ad conſequens.*

But I rather take the words as we render them to expreſſe the ſad effects and fruits of his ſin; As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid; *Becauſe thou haſt taken a pledge of thy brother for nought, &c. becauſe thou haſt ſent widows away empty, and the armes of the fatherleſſe have been broken*, therefore *ſnares are round about thee*, &c. The words may have a threefold Alluſion.

Hoſtile aliquid & obſidionale ſignificat.

Firſt, To the beſiedging of a City, ſnares are round about thee, thou art now hemde in on every ſide with troubles; as Chriſt threatens *Jeruſalem*; *Thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee*, &c. A trench is but a great ſnare to catch men, as men catch birds and vermine in ſnares. Or

Secondly, The Alluſion may be to Impriſonment, thou art compaſſed with ſtrong walles, and ſhut in with gates, thou art ſhackel'd with iron ſnares.

Thirdly, The words may allude to hunting and fowling, in ſuch diſports nets and ſnares are ſet to take the intended game. Snares are often ſpoken of in Scripture, to intimate or ſet forth the afflictions and ſorrows that entrap and hold the ſons of men So that to ſay, *Snares are round about thee*, is no more but thus, troubles are round about thee; and theſe ſnares are ſometimes ſet by the hand of man, ſometimes by the immediate hand of God. Good things are often made a ſnare to the undoing of evill men, and evill things are often made a ſnare to the troubling, though not to the undoing of good men. But I ſhall not proſecute this alluſion, having ſpoken of it at the 18th Chap: *v.* 6, 7. 8. where *Job* complaines that God had taken him in his ſnare; as alſo in the 19th Chapter at the 5th verſe.

And ſudden fear troubleth thee.

We may underſtand this feare; firſt, for the paſſion of feare, or for feare within: Secondly, for the occaſion of feare, which is feare without. *Sudden fear troubleth thee*, that is, the appearance or apprehenſion of ſome terrible thing cauſeth thee to feare. Feare is often put in Scripture for the thing feared, for the object of feare, or for that which cauſeth feare. Thus alſo hope is put for the thing hoped for, and *viſion* for the thing ſeene, or the object of the viſion.

Paſſio pro objecto & materia ſunt in omni idiomate familiare. Sanct.

Thirdly, Some expound fear in the Text, for that ſpeciall

all feare which riſeth from guilt, or for terror of conſcience. *Sudden fear troubleth thee*; That is, thy conſcience flyes in thy face and affrights thee; thy feare flows not from any outward troubles that threaten thee, or from wants that afflict thee, but from thoſe wickedneſſes which have been committed by thee; thy conſcience vexeth and tormenteth thee, not onely with fear, but with ſuddain fear; fear ruſheth upon thee unexpectedly, violently, like an armed man. *Sudden fear troubleth thee.* Taking fear in all or any one of theſe interpretations.

Note.

Sudden fear ſurprizeth ſecureſt ſinners.

When they ſhall ſay peace and quietneſſe, then ſorrow and anguiſh come upon them as paine upon a woman in travell, and they ſhall not eſcape. The Prophet in viſion (*Zech.* 5. 1.) *Saw a flying roll*; That flying roll was the Curſe: And it was called a *flying roll*, to note the ſpeedy and ſudden coming of thoſe judgements that were written in it; They came not onely upon the ſpurre, but upon the winge. They came flying; Flying is a ſwift motion, and that motion is applyed to judgement, when once God giveth it a Commiſſion to come. Hence alſo (*Deut* 32. 41.) the ſword is called a lightning ſword, or a ſword that hath lightning in it; *If I* (ſayth the Lord) *whet my glittering* (or lightning) *ſword*. The ſword of the Lord is as Lightning; it hath burning and ſwiftneſs in it; divine vengeance cometh as Lightning. It is called alſo the overflowing ſcourge (*Iſa.* 28. 15.) 'Tis a ſcourge becauſe the laſhes of it cauſe much ſmart and paine, and 'tis *an over-flowing ſcourge* to note the ſuddennes of it; The ſcourge comes in like a mighty flood.

Again, This ſuddenneſs of feare, or of things feared, may have reference unto the ſecurity of wicked men, who though they have often heard of dangers, and judgements have been threatned upon them, yet they alwayes come ſuddenly upon them, becauſe they never prepare for them. To ſuch as are unprepared, evills are alwayes ſudden, how often ſoever they have been warned of them. As to him that is prepared, death is never ſudden, though he dye) as we vulgarly phraſe it) a ſud-

den death. So he that is unprepared for death, dyeth ſuddenly, though he dye that which we commonly call a lingring death. Thus death and judgement ſhall come ſuddenly upon all ungodly men. *It ſhall be* (ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 24. 37.) *as in the dayes of Noah, they were eating and drinking, they were marrying, and giving in marriage, till the day that Noah entred into the Arke, and knew not till the floud came, and took them all away.* But did they not know of the floud, till the floud came; aſſuredly they did, for *Noah* foretold them of and preached the coming of the floud, a hundred and twenty yeares before it came. (*Gen.* 6.3.) *My ſpirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive (I will not alwayes be contending) yet his dayes ſhall be an hundred and twenty yeares*; That is, he ſhall have an hundred and twenty yeares warning, all that time the old world had warning of the floud, and *Noah* preached upon that Text all that time; yet the floud came upon them (ſaith the Text) and *they knew it not*; that is, they regarded not what *Noah* ſaid; they tooke no thought neither to prevent the floud, nor to prepare for it. The Author to the *Hebrews* tels us, that *Noah by faith being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with feare, prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his houſe, by which he condemned the world* (that is, the then world, of unbelief and hardnes of heart) *& became heyr of the righteouſneſſe which is by faith* (Heb. 11. 7.) He had a holy feare in him, and a faith alſo; a faith that the thing ſhould be done, and a fear of God who threatned to doe that thing. *Thus by faith being moved with feare, he prepared an Ark for the ſafety of himſelfe and of his houſehold.* Why did not the reſt alſo make preparation? they did not beleeve, nor did they feare. Chriſt rebuked his Diſciples in the ſtorme at Sea (*Matth.* 8.) with, *why are ye fearfull. O ye of little faith*; The old world might have been rebuked, with, why are ye feareleſſe, even becauſe ye are of little, or rather of no faith at all. *Unleſſe dangers threatned be beleeved, they are never feared, and unleſſe they be both beleeved and feared, they are never avoyded. Whenſoever the Lord of ſuch ſervants ſhall come, he cometh in a day, when they look not for him, and in an houre that they are not aware of* (Matth. 24. 50.) that is, he cometh ſuddenly. What can come more ſuddenly upon any man, then that which he looked not for, not was at all aware of. Thus he ſhall come *to cut them aſunder,*

der, and to appoint them their portion with hypocrites; There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. Sudden feare troubleth thee;

Verſ. 11. *Or darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee, and abundance of waters cover thee.*

Some render this verſe by way of interrogation; *Shalt thou not ſee darkneſs? and ſhall not the abundance of waters cover thee?* ſhalt thou only not ſee darkneſs, and paſſe unpuniſhed for ſuch monſtrous wickednesſes? As if he had ſa d; thou ſeemeſt to wonder, that darkneſs is upon thee, thou makeſt ſtrange of it, that flouds or abundance of waters cover thee. But haſt thou not deſerved and called forth theſe Judgements, by many ſinfull provocations?

Aut autu ſolus tenebras non videres & tanta ſcelera impuni ferres?

Others render this Text, not as a Queſtion, but as a direct Aſſertion; *Thou thoughteſt, that thou ſhouldeſt, or thou hadſt a conceit, that thou ſhouldeſt never ſee darkneſſe, nor any trouble coming upon thee, thy heart was liſt up in hope of Impunity; thou didſt perſwade thy ſelfe, that God had as high an opinion of thee, as thou hadſt of thy ſelfe, or thou haſt flattered thy ſelfe in thy ſinfull way, and thou thoughteſt that God would have flattered thee alſo.*

But I ſhall rather (as we) connect it with the former verſe, carrying on the ſame intention;

Or darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee.

Darkneſs may be taken either properly, or improperly; darkneſs properly taken is that of the ayre by the withdrawing of the Sunne: This is not here intended. Darkneſs improperly taken is that of our ſtate: and it is twofold: Firſt, Internall, which is indeed ignorance, or the darkneſs of the minde: As if he had ſaid, Darkneſs veyles the eye of thy underſtanding, that thou canſt not ſee, either the hand of God upon thee for thy ſins, or thoſe thy ſins which have cauſed God to lay his heavy hand upon thee. Thy underſtanding is darkned, that thou canſt not ſee; This intellectuall or internall darkneſſe is twofold.

Firſt, Naturall or inbred, every man hath naturally ſo much darkneſs in him, that as he cannot ſee the truths that are in the word of God, ſo he cannot ſee the intendment of the works of God.

Secondly,

Stupidam explanationi tua ſcelera harum tuarum calamitatis quæ more inundantium & obruentium cuſtam eſſe vides. Merc.

Secondly, Judiciary, or inflicted (*Iſa.* 6. 9.) *Goe and tell this people, heare ye indeed, but underſtand not: and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their eares heavy, and ſhut their eyes.* What were theſe eyes and eares that were to be made heavy and ſhut? Surely, they are to be underſtood, not of Organicall, but of intellectuall eares and eyes. But who was to ſhut theſe eyes? A holy Prophet. And how was he to ſhut them? By prophecying or ſpeaking to them in the Name of the Lord. The proper worke of the Word is to open the eyes, and enlighten the mind. But when a people have long ſhut their own eyes againſt, or only dallyed with (that tranſcendent mercy) the light, then God (which is the ſevereſt judgement) ſhuts their eyes, and darkens them with light. Of this Judiciary darkneſs, ſome interpret the preſent Text; as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid; there is a worſe plague upon thee, then all thoſe ſpoken of, even blindneſs and confuſion of minde, ſo that thou canſt neyther ſee what brought thee into them, nor how to find thy way out, but art as a man under water, or in the darke, amazed in theſe thy afflictions, not knowing what to doe, or which way to turn thy ſelfe.

Secondly, Darkneſs taken improperly is Externall, ſo a ſtate of ſorrow and affliction, is a ſtate of darkneſſe. As before *ſnares*, ſo here *darkneſs*, notes any troubleſome condition, or the trouble of any mans condition. And when to darkneſſe, this is added, *Darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee*, it may import the greateſt degree of darkneſs, even darkneſs in perfection, or as the Scripture ſpeaks, *thick darkneſs*, yea, *outer darkneſs*. There is a darkneſs in which we may ſee, a darkneſs which hath ſome kinde of light in it, but when darkneſs is ſo thicke that we cannot ſee, that is, that we cannot ſee any thing in it, (as we commonly ſay of extreame darkneſs, 'tis ſo darke, that a man cannot ſee his hand) then 'tis perfect darkneſs. Light is not (properly) ſeene, but 'tis the medium or meanes by which we ſee; much leſſe is darknes ſeene, it being properly that which intercepts and hinders ſight; yet 'tis rare to meete with darkeneſſe which hath not ſome mixture or tinctures of light, or with ſuch darkneſſe as in which nothing at all can be ſeene: yet ſuch was this metaphoricall darkneſſe, with which he ſuppoſed *Job* was muffled up. I have more then once in other paſſages

paſſages of this Booke, met with and explained this terme, ſhewing how and why afflictions and troubles are expreſſed by it, and therefore I ſhall not now ſtay upon it. Only here take notice. That the old Heathens had ſuch conceptions of darkneſſe, And therefore being in a proſperous ſtate they had recourſe to the *Sun*, to *Jupiter*, *Minerva*, *Mercury*, their Idol-Deities, as the diſpenſers of light and comfort; but being under ſufferings and ſorrows, they made their applications to the *Earth* to *Neptune*, and others, whom they vainly beleeved, were Rulers of the Night and Lords of darkneſſe, as if theſe could command and chaſe away all evills from them. Scripture Language is full of ſuch Deſcriptions about men in ſorrow. *Darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee;*

Gentiles idem ſentire guſtiebant dum, non eoſdem in proſperis, quos in adverſis adibant deos. In proſperis quidem ſe Jovem, vel Minervam, Mercurium, Apollinem, hos omnes quaſi lucis & ſecundarum rerum largitio eſſet in adverſis tellurem, Neptunum & alios malorum depulſores, neſcio malium potentes, quaſi tenebrarum ipſe dominus eſſent. Bold.

And abundance of waters cover thee.

* The word rendred *abundance*, ſignifies a company or troop of waters, which meete and march together, even as horſes prepared for battell, and ready to give the charge. So the word is tranſlated (2 *King.* 9.17.) *A Watchman from the Tower ſaid, I ſee a company.* And that was *Jehu* with his troopes, who came marching furiouſly with the revenge of God in his hand upon the houſe of *Ahab*. And ſo *Ezek.* 26. 10. *By reaſon of the abundance of their horſes, their duſt ſhall cover thee; thy walls ſhall ſhake at the noyſe of the Horſemen, and of the Wheeles, and of the Chariots.* Reade the ſame uſe of the word (*Iſa.* 60. 6.) *The multitude* (ſome read the inundation) *of Camels ſhall cover thee;* They ſhall come in ſuch abundance, that they ſhall come like a floud, and ſhall be as the gathering of many waters. Troopes of Horſes and Camels ruſh together as many waters; And waters ruſh and throng together, even as many horſes. Thus, here abundance, or an Army of waters come in upon thee and cover thee. Waters in Scripture frequently ſignifie afflictions, (*Iſa.* 43. 2.) *When thou paſſeſt thorow the waters* (that is, thorow great afflictions) *I will be with thee* (Pſalm 18. 16.) *He drew me out of many waters*; That is, out of many afflictions. (*Pſal.* 66. 12.) *We went through fire and water, but thou broughteſt us forth into a wealthy place.* Fire and water, note all ſorts of afflictions, hot and cold, moyſt and dry. And ſome conceive that water in a metaphoricall ſence is ſo often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie affliction; becauſe water in a proper ſence did:

* וְשֹׁ֣וא *quamvis multitudinem aut inundationem ſignificat: cum celeritate quadam & ſtrepitu.*

did once afflict the whole world. As the generall Judgement upon the world at the last day shall be by fire, so the first generall Judgement upon the world, was by water; it was a floud of waters, by which the Lord destroyed the whole world. Likewise *Pharoah* and his Host of *Ægyptians* (which was the second most Eminent judgement, that ever was in the world) were overwhelmed by the waters of the red Sea. Thus *Moses* sang (*Exo.* 15. 4, 5.) *Pharoahs Chariot & his host hath he cast into the Sea, his chosen Captaines also are drowned in the red Sea; The depths have covered them, they sank into the bottom as a stone.* And again, (*v.* 10.) *The Sea covered them, they sanke as Lead in the mighty waters.* Water being the Element and the Instrument, which God hath so often used in his angry dispensations towards sinful men, it may emphatically expresse any dispensation of his anger. Yet if we consider the very nature of the thing it self, it carrieth significancy enough to be the Embleme of saddest and soarest affliction.

First, There is in water a swallowing power; as water is easily swallowed, so it swallowes all up. Man cannot subsist in it when it is most peaceable, and he can hardly escape out of it when 'tis enraged. Sorrow and affliction are swallowers also, unlesse mercy appeare and moderate them, they drowne and overthrow all. The Apostle useth that expression when he adviseth the *Corinthians* (2 *Ep*: 2. 7.) *To forgive and comfort the incestuous person*, whom, according to his advice, they had formerly Excommunicated or cast out from fellowship in the Church; *Lest* (saith he) *such a one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow.* Sorrow of any sort, even sorrow for sinne may possibly have an excesse, or an over-muchnes in it; and when ever it hath so (beyond the end for which it serves, for sorrow is not of any worth in it selfe, but as it serves to a spirituall end, When (I say) sorrow hath such an excesse, then) not onely the comforts, but the gifts and usefulnesse of the person sorrowing, are in danger to be swallowed up by it.

Secondly, Water doth not onely swallow up, but enter in; while it covereth the body, it fills the bowells. Thus affliction like water, fills within as well as covers without. *David* complaines that his afflictions did so (*Psal.* 69. 1.) *Save me O God, for the waters are come in unto my soule.* Not onely have these

these waters swelled over me, but they are soakt into me. Inward or soule-afflictions, as well as outward, and bodyly afflictions, are set forth by waters. (*Psal.* 109 18.) *As he cloathed himselfe with cursing, like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowells (or within him) like water, and like oyle into his bones.* Liquids penetrate, so doe afflictions.

Thirdly, As the water is not mans proper Element, he lives and breaths in the ayre, not in the water; So affliction is not our proper Element, though it be due to our sin, yet it is not proper to our nature. Man was not made to live in affliction, as the fish was made to live in the water; and therefore as it is said; *The Lord doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the Children of men,* (*Lam.* 3. 33.) 'Tis (as it were) beside the nature of God, when he afflicts the children of men. So it is said (*Heb.* 12. 11.) *No chastning for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.* Man is out of his Element when he is under chastnings. He was made at first to live in the light of Gods countenance, in the smiles and embraces of divine love. As man is out of his way when he sins, so he is off from his end when he suffers; He was not designed for the overwhelming choaking waters of sorrow and judgement, but for the sweet refreshing ayre of joy and mercy. It often proves a mercy in the event to be covered with these waters; To be covered with them, that we may be washed by them is a mercy, but only to be covered with them, especially (as *Eliphaz* here saith of *Job* was) to be deeply covered with them is a deep and soare affliction. *Abundance of waters cover thee.*

Hence note;

That as God hath treasures of mercy, and abounds in goodnes, so he hath treasures of affliction, and abundance of wrath.

As God hath abundance of waters sealed up in the Clouds, as in a treasury, and he can unlocke his treasury and let them out whensoever he pleaseth, either to refresh or overflow the Earth; so he hath abundance of afflictions, and he can let them forth, as out of a treasury, when he pleaseth. And as we read (*Ezek.* 47.) that the waters of the Sanctuary, those holy waters were of severall degrees; first, to the Ankles, secondly, to the knees, then to the Loines, and then a river that could

not be paſſed over, abundance of waters. Thus alſo the bitter waters, the waters of affliction are of ſeverall degrees: ſome waters of afflictions are but Ancle deep, they onely make us a little wet-ſhod, there are other waters up to the knees; and others to the Loyns, and others we may rightly call abundance of waters, a ſea of waters; *I am come into deep waters* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 69. 2.) or *into depth of waters, where the flouds overflow me*; And having ſaid (*Pſ.* 42. 6.) *O my God, my ſoul is caſt down within mee*; He adds in the next words (*v.* 7.) *Deep calleth unto deep at the noyſe of thy water-ſpouts: All thy waves and thy billowes are gone over me.* Where, by deep to deep, by water-ſpouts, by waves and billowes, he elegantly ſets forth his diſtreſſe, in alluſion to a Ship at Sea in a vehement ſtorm and ſtreſſe of weather; when the ſame wave upon whoſe back the veſſell rides out of one deep, plungeth it downe into another; Thus the afflicted are toſſed and overwhelmed in a Sea of trouble, till they are at their wits end, if not at their faiths end.

Take two or three Deductions from all theſe words layd together. We ſee, by how many metaphors, the ſorrows of this life are ſet forth, even by *ſnares, and feares and darknes, and waters.*

Hence note;

First, *That as God hath abundance of afflictions in his power, ſo he hath variety of wayes and meanes to afflict the ſons of men; eyther for the puniſhment of their ſin, or for the tryall of their graces.*

If one will not doe it another ſhall; if the ſnare will not, fear ſhall, if feare will not, darknes ſhall; and if darknes will not, the waters ſhall, and if waters of one hight will not doe it, he will have waters deep enough to doe it; abundance of waters ſhall doe it; he hath variety of wayes to deale both with ſinners and with Saints.

Secondly, Conſider the inference which *Eliphaz* makes, *Therefore ſnares*, &c. *are upon thee*; That is, becauſe thou haſt done wickedly in not releeving and in oppreſſing the poore, *therefore* ſnares have entangled thee. This (though falſe in *Jobs* particular caſe, yet) is a truth in Generall. And it teacheth us, That, *There is an unavoydable ſequell between ſinne and ſorrow.* Looke upon ſinne in its owne nature, and ſo the ſequell is unavoydable, ſin is bigge with ſorrow; as affliction burdens the ſinner, ſo ſinne is burdened with affliction. Sinne hath all ſorts of affliction in its bowells; and we may ſay of all the evills that afflict us, *they are our ſinnes.* Sinne is formally the tranſgreſſion of the Law, and ſinne is virtually the puniſhment of tranſgreſſors. Many (I grant) are afflicted for tryall of their graces (as hath been ſhewed before) but grace had never been thus tryed if man had not ſinned. Sinne is the remote cauſe of all afflictions, and it is the next or immediate procuring cauſe of moſt afflictions. Would any man avoyde the ſnare, let him feare to ſinne; would he avoyd feare, let him feare to doe evill; would he keep out of darkneſſe, and not be covered with abundance of waters, let him take heed he drink not iniquity like water, let him have no fellowſhip with the unfruitfull workes of darkneſſe. God tells the ſinner plainly what portion he is to expect; *Say woe to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him.* (*Iſa.* 33. 11.) We may as well hope to avoyd burning when we run into the fire, or dirtying when we run into the mire, as to eſcape ſmarting when we run into ſin.

Yet more diſtinctly, we may conſider all thoſe evills comprehended under thoſe words in the Text, *Snares, darkneſſe*, &c. eyther in reference to wicked men, or to the Saints. Snares and darknes upon the wicked, are the iſſues of divine wrath. While theſe ſad diſpenſations are ſent out and meete with Saints, they are the iſſues of divine love. For though a godly man may provoke God to anger, and finde by many evidences that God (as to his actings) is angry with him, yet as to his perſon he alwayes loves him. And therefore (as a wicked mans Table is made his ſnare, ſo) he is aſſured that his ſnare ſhall be made to him a Table, that his darkneſſe ſhall worke light, his evills good to him. He is alſo aſſured that the Lord will deliver him out of theſe ſnares, and cut the coards of the wicked. (*Pſal.* 129. 4.) That he will deliver him from feare, from darkneſſe, and bring him up out of the abundance of waters which cover him, as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 36. 2.) *For this* (that is, becauſe thou art ſo gracious) *ſhall every one that is godly pray*

unto thee in a time when thou mayst be found (The Hebrew, is *in a finding time*, which according to our translation, notes the season when God may be found, as the Prophet speaks (*Isa.* 55. 6.) Yet it may be well expounded for the time when trouble finds, that is, takes hold of the godly man. And so the word is used (*Psal.* 116. 3.) *The paines of hell gat hold of me* (we put in the Margin) *found me*. In which sence the word is used also, (*Psal.* 21. 8.) *Thine hand shall finde out*, (that is, take hold of, and apprehend) *all thine enemies, thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee*. Now in *this finding time*, either when God may be found, or when trouble finds a godly man, he (setting himselfe to pray) hath this promise, *surely in the flouds of great waters, they* (that is, the floods of great waters, by which are meant, great dangers) *shall not come nigh him*, (that is, the Godly man) to hurt or drown him. Sometimes prayer keeps the flood off, and alwayes prayer delivers the Godly man out of the flood. Wicked men have no mind to come nigh God with their hearts (and so some interpret the latter part of this verse in the Psalme) nor will God admit them nigh unto himselfe, in the floods of great waters. And the floods of great waters shall not (which is the scope of our reading) come nigh the Godly man for his hurt, when he drawes nigh to God in prayer with his heart.

Thus we have seen the sins of *Job* drawne out into a Charge, and the Judgement of *Eliphaz* upon it, what the event, the sequell, or Issue of those sins, was *snares and feares, and waters, and darkness*.

There is yet one thing further, that I shall here take notice of from the constant course of *Jobs* friends in dealing with him. We see that still they charge him with sinne, and still insist upon it, that all his afflictions and miseries were the fruits of his sinne. *Job* (as hath appeared in opening severall passages of this Booke) hath as often disproved their inference, and denied that his sufferings were caused by his sinne, at least not by any such way of sinning, as they charged him with. Labouring also much to enforme them, that God hath many other reasons why he afflicts his people, and that God might take libertie to afflict him, though he were no such kinde of creature as they rendred him; yet notwithstanding all he could

could say, either to purge himselfe or better conforme them, they persevered in the same opinion, both concerning his person, and and the cause of his afflictions.

Whence note;

It is hard to convince those who are under a mistake, whether about persons, or doctrines.

Error is as binding upon the conscience, and as strongly embraced by the affections, as truth is; For it binds and is embraced, not in the name of an error, but in the name of truth. And men are therefore wedded to, and in love with their own conceptions, because (how monstrous and hard favoured soever in themselves, yet) nothing is more beautifull in their eye then they, *No man* (saith the Apostle) *ever hated his owne flesh, but loved and cherished it*. The flesh of our minds (such are all false principles and positions) is more loved and cherished by us, then the flesh of our bodies. Besides, when men have once taken up an opinion, they think it a dishonour to lay it down again. 'Tis rare to finde a man that will yeeld up his Judgement, though it be a misguided one, or acknowledge that he is in an error, though he begins to take some knowledge, or at least some suspition of it. A light intimation, or onely the Appearance of a probability will amount to a proofe against eyther persons or doctrines which we like not; but the cleerest demonstrations will hardly raise a Jealousie against what we like. Let *Job* say what he will in his owne case, he cannot be beleeved by his friends, and his friends will say again what once they had said, though it had been more then once before fully answered. The present age hath given us sad experiences of this thing For, as many have been unstable, and tossed to and fro with every winde of (false) doctrine, so others have been stubborn and unmoved from their errors, though the strongest winds of truth have breathed, yea blown hard upon them. And those prejudices which have (with so much severity) been taken up by brethren against brethren; how doe they remaine, in many minds, as mountains, unmoved to this very day?

I know

I know not which is worſe, unſetledneſs, in the truth, and an eaſineſſe to let it goe, or tenaciouſneſſe in an errour, and a hardneſſe to let it goe. Nor doe I well know which is worſe, a readineſs to take up hard thoughts of our brethren, or an unreadineſſe to lay them downe. Were the lawes of love to man, and zeale for God obſerved, theſe extreames would alwayes be avoyded. Pure zeal for God would fixe us in the truth, and make us more eaſie to be brought off from our moſt applauded errors. True love to man, would cauſe us to examine every ground of ſuſpicion againſt a brother twice, before we doe indeed ſuſpect him once; And it would cauſe us to rejoyce in any appearance of his innocence, whereby we might diſcharge our own Spirits of all ſuſpicions concerning him. Our *love* (as the Apoſtle prayes *Phil.* 1. 9) *ought to abound in knowledge and in all ſudgement.* That is, we ought to love Judiciouſly as well as affectionately or ſincerely. So that, true love will not over looke the faults of another, nor will it approve againſt light. Yet true love is ready to entertaine any light offered, that grounds of ſuſpition may be removed, and we reſtored to a right underſtanding of our brethren.

Jo b,

Jo b, Chap. 22. Verſ. 12, 13, 14.

Is not God in the height of heaven? and beholds the height of the Starres how high they are.
And thou ſayeſt, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?
Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he ſeeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

IN the former part of this Chapter, we have found *Eliphaz* charging *Job* with thoſe hainous crimes, injuſtice and uncharitableneſſe towards man; in theſe three verſes he proceeds to charge him with a higher crime, even irreligiouſneſſe and impiety againſt God; as if (at leaſt) *Job* doubted, if not denyed the providence of God about what is done here below, or affirmed that he neither rewarded the righteous according to their good, nor puniſheth the wicked according to the evill which they have done. That's the ſcope of this context, in which we may obſerve.

Firſt, A twofold truth held forth.

Secondly, A wrong ſuggeſtion of two errors, as ariſing from thoſe truths.

Thirdly, An indeavour to prove and make good, what he had wrongfully ſuggeſted.

Theſe two truths are contained in the 22th verſe; firſt, *God is in the height of heaven*; ſecondly, *The Stars are very high*; theſe are cleare truths; from theſe *Eliphaz* makes a wrong ſuggeſtion, as if *Job* upon thoſe grounds of Gods being in the height of heaven, &c. had pleaſed himſelfe with this conceit, that God could not (at ſuch a diſtance) take notice of what paſſeth among, or is acted by men in this inferiour world.

(Ver. 13.) *And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know? can he judge through the darke cloud?* As if he had ſaid, God being in the height of heaven, cannot know, much leſſe judge concerning the ſtate of things here below; Why what ſhould hinder? He tells us what in the 14th verſe, where (which was the third thing) he endeavours to prove his ſuggeſtion; *Thick clouds are a cove-*

a covering to him that he seeth not, that's the first proof: and then we have a second, in the latter end of that verse, God hath other things to do then to mind what is done here, he hath higher businesses and imployments then to look upon us, who are creeping upon mole-hills, and engaged about a heape of earth; for, *he walketh in the circuit of heaven*; that is, there lyeth his great worke, he hath enough in a nobler Spheat to imploy himself in; and therefore surely, thou thinkest, that God takes no care at all, or not such speciall care about the affayres and wayes of men. This is the summe and scope of these three verses. They are a new charge of impiety upon *Job*, as shutting up or restraining providence of God to the things of heaven alone; and we seek how *Eliphaz* frames arguments and proofes of the point for *Job*, which as will appeare afterwards) never came into his heart.

Now though *Eliphaz* misapplyed all this to *Job*, yet herein he fully characters, and clearly paints out the spirit of carnall men, for such secure themselves in their evill wayes upon this presumption, that God takes no notice of them, or that he hath something else to do then to trouble himselfe with what they are doing.

Ver. 12. *Is not God in the height of heaven?*

Nonne deus sublimior est cœlo? Pagni: *Nonne deus cœlum altum tenet?* Tygur: *Nonne deus in sublimate cœlorum?* Mont: *Deus sublimitas cœlorum.* Hebr:

There are divers readings of these words; first, thus; *Is not God higher then the heavens?* A second thus; *Doth not God possesse the high heaven?* The Originall may strictly be rendred, *God the height of heaven*; that is, *God is above all heavens*: we render well; *God is in the height* or *sublimitie of heaven.*

This Question; *Is not God in the height of heaven?* is taken three wayes.

First, Some read it as an Exhortation given by *Eliphaz* to *Job*, to draw off the motion of his thoughts, & most of all the setled bent of his heart from those inferiour things, his losses & troubles, his sorrows, paines, and sicknesses; he would divert his minde from these worldly sorrows, and raise it up to heavenly enjoyments, *Is not God in heaven?* As if he had said, *Why standest thou poring upon things below? Why dwellest thou so much upon thy dunghill; and thy present poverty, God is in the height of heaven, consider him there.* This is both a safe and a very spirituall

tuall way to ease our minds of all the troubles and sorrows which we meete with in this world; could we but ascend in Spirit to the height where God is, could we by an eye of faith look to him, live upon him, and in him, all burdens would be light, and pressures easie to us.

Secondly, This question may be taken as a plaine assertion or affirmation, and it is of the same value and signification with this, *God is in the height of heaven, there he is, and from thence he beholds all the children of men, their wayes and workes.*

Thirdly, *Is not God in the height of heaven?* May be understood not as the question of *Eliphaz*, and so his affirmation, but as the question of *Job*, and so his supposition. As if *Eliphaz* apprehended *Job* thus speaking in his heart; *Is not God* (sayest thou) *in the height of heaven?* or, doest not thou, O *Job*, say thus; *God is in the height of heaven*; I grant that he is there, but I deny that he is there, in thy sence, or according to thy opinion. He is not concluded, or shut up there, he is not so in the height of heaven, but that he mindeth what is done upon the earth, yea in the very depths of hell. As if he had said; *Thy thoughts and conceptions of God are too strait and narrow; Thou speakest much below God, while thou sayest he is in the height of heaven. While thou confinest God to heaven, thou makest him like thy selfe on earth.*

Annon deus est (inquis) in altitudine cœli? Jun.

From these words in the two former Expositions,

Observe;

That the height of heaven, or heaven above, is the place of Gods speciall residence.

Heaven is my throne (saith the Lord, *Isa.* 66. 1.) the throne is the seate of a Prince, there he declares his power, and his state; his glory shines from his throne. A Prince looks like a common man when he is abroad in the world, but when upon his throne, then the rayes of Majesty break forth, and he appeares as he is. Thus the holy Prophet begs a gracious look of the Lord from heaven (*Isa.* 63 15.) *Looke downe from heaven, the habitation of thy holinesse, and of thy glory.* Heaven is called the habitation of Gods holinesse, and of his glory, because his holinesse and glory shine forth more in heaven, then upon the earth; little of the holinesse of God is discovered to us here, though so much of it breaks forth here as causeth the

heart of carnall men to quarrell with it continually. Nor are any able with theſe eyes, or rather with theſe hearts to beare the glory of God, or endure his holineſſe. When but ſome extraordinary glimpſes of theſe appeared to *Iſaiah*, he cryed out, *Woe is me, I am undone* (or *cut off*) *becauſe I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of Hoſts*, (Iſa. 6. 5.) As God is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, ſo man is of impurer eyes then to behold the glory and holineſſe of God in cleare manifeſtations of it, and therefore heaven is the ſeate, the habitation of his holineſſe, and of his glory. Hence we may take two further inferences.

First, That *our hearts, and our eyes ſhould be lifted upwards*; the whole currunt of Scripture ſpeaks of God as above in heaven. And that's the reaſon why the Apoſtle (*Col.* 3. 1.) exhorts, *Set your affections on things above, and not on things here below*; And as on things above, ſo moſt of all upon God who is above. The old word was, *Lift up your hearts*; and *David* ſaith in prayer, (*Pſal.* 25. 1.) *I lift up my ſoule to thee.* And againe, (*Pſal.* 123. 1.) *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwell'ſt in the heavens.* Yea our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelfe when he prayed (*Joh.* 17. 1.) *Lift up his eyes to heaven, and ſaid, Father the houre is come, glorifie thy Sonne*, &c. The eye lift up to heaven is a ſigne of the heart lift up to heaven, and that corporeall viſible action, ſerves to fixe our moſt ſpirituall affections upon the inviſible God. 'Tis indeed an eaſie thing to lift the eyes up to heaven, but it is very hard yea impoſſible, without a divine aſſiſtance to lift up the heart to heaven; the heart of a prophane worldling mudds ſo much in the earth, that he ſeldome lifts up ſo much as his eyes to heaven; and how much or how often ſoever a hypocrite lifts up his eyes to heaven, yet ſtill his heart mudds in the earth. The eye looks upward naturally, but if ever the heart looke upward, 'tis a worke of Grace.

Surſum corda.

Secondly, Then *ſerve the Lord with reverence and holy feare, in all your addreſſes to him, and appearings before him.* We reverence thoſe who are on high on earth, and ſhall we not reverence him who is higher then the higheſt? him who is in the height of heaven? While Chriſt bids us ſay, *Our Father which art in heaven*, he teacheth us, as to pray with confidence, becauſe God is our father, ſo to pray with reverence, becauſe he is a father in heaven, (*Matth.* 6. 9.) The Preacher (*Eccl.* 5. 2.) makes this an argument why we ſhould be taken up in high thoughts of God, why we ſhould ſpeak in a reverentiall manner both of him, and to him; *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty to utter any thing before God.* He puts (as it were) a double bridle upon man in his drawing neere to God; firſt, upon his mouth, *Let not thy mouth be raſh*; and ſecondly, upon his heart (for the heart will talke at randome as well as the mouth, yea the heart will talke more at randome then the mouth can; and there is praying with the heart alone, as well as with the heart and mouth together, therefore ſaith he) *Let not thy heart be haſty to utter any thing before God*; Why? *for God is in heaven, and thou art upon the earth, therefore let thy words be few.* Here are indeed two arguments to enforce this compoſure of ſpirit; firſt, the highneſſe and Greatneſſe of God; ſecondly, the lowneſs and vileneſs of man. Conſider God is above, and thou art below, not onely in regard of place, but of ſtate and dignity, of power and majeſty. The being of God in heaven, notes not onely a power of ſoveraignty to command us, but a power of ability both to puniſh and to provide for us, to puniſh our raſhneſſe, and to ſupply all our wants wherewith we acquaint him, and humbly mention before him; therefore *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty*, &c. The ſame *Solomon* in the ſame booke, allegorically deſcribing the declined decrepid condition of man, ſaith of the old man, that he is *afraid of that which is high* (*Eccl.* 12. 5.) Young men will be clambering and aſcending, but old men are *afraid of that which is high*, they dare not goe up a high ſteepe place, leaſt their ſtrength or breath ſhould fayle, or leaſt their braine ſhould turne, and they through giddineſſe tumble downe. Old men love to keepe upon levell or even ground, and are afraid of that which is high. Surely both young and old, have reaſon to be afraid of *him that is high*, to have reverentiall thoughts of God, who is in the height of heaven, higher then the heavens. The diſtance of man from God, as God is in heaven and man on earth, is great, and the diſſimilitude of man to God, as God is holy and man corrupt, is farre greater,

greater; either of these Considerations single is enough, but both these laid together, is abundantly enough to keep the heart in an humble selfe-abasing frame before the Lord.

2ly, Taking these words, *Is not God in the height of heaven?* As the supposed speech of *Job*, thou sayest God is in the height of heaven; that is, confined to heaven, so, that he looks no further, but thou art deceived, God is not lockt up in heaven, he looks to all things here on earth. As the earth is the Lords, and the fulnes of it, as to right & propriety, so the earth is the Lords with all the fulnes of it, as to care and providence. Though there be a distinctnesse in the manner or manifestation of his being in heaven and on earth; yet he is as truly and as much on earth as he is in heaven.

Hence note;

God is omnipresent, or every where.

Though we are to adore and worship God as in heaven, yet we must not shut up God in heaven; as he is in heaven, so he is upon the earth also, he is with us, yea he is in us, he is in all places, not circumscribed by any, nor limited to any place. God is present in all places, and fills all places with his presence, onely he doth not declare his presence alike in all places. The Lord appears where and as he pleaseth, but he cannot be otherwise or otherwhere then he is, and that is every where. While the Psalmist queryed, *Whether shall I go from thy presence?* He was so farre from imagining that any such place could be found, that in the very next words he concludeth God to be every where, by an enumeration of all places, (*Psal.* 139. 7, 8.) *If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Hel, behold thou art there.* (Hel standeth in utmost opposition to heaven, as heaven in Scripture-language is the highest, so hell is the lowest place; now saith *David*, *If I make my bed in hell, thou art there*) *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand leade me, and thy right hand shall hold me*; That is, there I shall find thee efficaciously present with me. The Lord having said (*Isa.* 66. 1.) *Heaven is my throne*, presently adds, *and the earth is my footstool*; So the earth is called, because its scituation in nature is below the heavens, his throne is there, his footstoole is here.

here. (*Jer.* 23. 23, 24.) *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a farre off? Can any hide himselfe in secret places, that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?* All these expostulating questions, are resolved into this one position. God is every where; And though some read the first, not as a Question, but as an Assertion, Thus; *I am a God at hand, and not a God afarre off*, yet the sence is the same; God therein affirming, that he is ever neere us, and never afarre off from us, whereso ever we are. Though God be in those places which are furthest off from us, as well as in those that are neere at hand, yet God himselfe is never afarre off from us, but alwayes at hand. When *Solomon* had set up the Temple, (1 *King.* 8. 27.) He was sure of the presence of God in it; and therefore did not speak doubtingly, but admiringly, when he asked, *But, will God indeed dwell on earth?* (that is, will God manifest himselfe gloriously on the earth?) *behold the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much lesse this house that I have builded? Solomon* knew that heaven could not contain, that is, limit God, much lesse could the house which he had builded. Yet the Lord made the Temple another heaven to himselfe, it was as his second heaven, there the Lord had a kinde of glorious residence, beyond what he had in any other part of the world; Now the Assemblyes and Congregations of the Saints are in a speciall manner the dwelling place of God, and his second heaven, He dwells so much in the Churches that he seems not to dwell at all in any part of the world beside (2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 17.) *I will dwell in them, and walk in them. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye seperate saith the Lord, and touch not the uncleane thing, and I will receive you.* God who is in all the world, dwels onely in and with his people. They who separate from whatsoever is unholy, have him neereſt them who is altogether Holy. To conclude this poynt, we may make use of that distinction of the Schooles to cleare the difference how a corporall substance, and a spirituall, as also how a spirituall created and uncreated substance, may be said to be in a place. All bodyes are in place *circumscriptively*, spirituall substances created, Angels and soules of men are in place *definitively*: We cannot draw a line about an Angell, as about the body of a man, yet the Angel is so in this place,

place, as not in another: but God who is a ſpirit, and uncreated, is in place *repletively*, that is, he filleth all places where he is, but is not limited by any place where he is, He is (as ſome have not unfitly ſpoken) *a Spheare whoſe center is every where, and whoſe circumference is no where.* This is a myſtery which indeed we are not able to comprehend by reaſon, but we muſt take it down by faith. The Lord is in the height of heaven, yet ſo there, as he is not ſhut up there.

But if any ſhall yet query, *How is the Lord every where?* how is he in heaven, and in earth? is it ſo as the Sun may be ſaid to be every where? the Sun is ſeated in heaven, yet is by way of communication on earth, the Sun by light, heate, or influence is all the world over, in ſome degree or other, yet the Sun moves onely in his Orbe. Or is God ſo every where, as a Soveraigne Prince, who though in perſon he reſide here or there, yet in power and Authority he is every where within his own Dominion? I anſwer, No; Theſe alluſions are farre below this truth. God is every where, not only as the Sun by light, heat, and influence, not onely as a Prince, by his power and Authority, but (as we ſpeak) in perſon, and in his Eſſence. Further, the Lords preſence in all places is not as that of the aire, which is more every where then the Sunne; the aire is every where filling all places, and ſo encompaſſing all bodies, as if it made them all but one Great body; yet that part of the aire that is in one place is not in another, for the aire is diviſible. But we muſt not take up any ſuch apprehenſions of God, for as he is every where, ſo he is wholly every where; God cannot be divided or parted as the air is & may. *The divine Eſſence* (as one of the Ancients hath expreſſed this aſtoniſhing myſtery) *is whole within all things, and whole without all things, no where included, no where excluded, containing all things, contained of nothing, yet not at all mingled with the nature of theſe things, nor defiled with their pollutions.* That which the Philoſopher ſpeaks of the ſoul of man, (*That it is all in the whole body, and whole in every part of the body*) comes neereſt this myſtery. Some quarrell at that expreſſion about the ſoule, yet there is a truth in it. The ſoule is indiviſible, much more God, whereſoever he is, he is all and altogether; he is every where, and every where all. So he is in the height of heaven, and ſo he is on earth below.

Divina eſſentia eſt tota intra omnia & tota extra omnia, nuſquam incluſa aut excluſa, omnia continens, a nullo contenta, nec propterea immiſtu rebus aut rerum ſordibus inquinata. Auguſt: Epiſt: 55. ad Dard:

But

But if God be every where, why doth Chriſt teach us to pray, *Our father which art in heaven,* (*Mat.* 6. 13.) And when the Heathen made that ſcoffing demand, *Where is now their God?* Why did *David* Anſwer, *Our God is in heaven,* (Pſal. 115. 2, 3.) To theſe and all other Texts of like import, we may anſwer, heaven is not there ſpoken of as bounding the preſence of God, but as guiding the faith and hope of man. *In the morning* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 5. 3.) *will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* When the eye hath no ſight of any helpe on earth, then faith may have the cleareſt viſions of it in heaven. And while God appeares ſo little in any Gratious diſpenſation for his people on earth, that the enemy begins to ſcoffe, *Where is now your God?* Then his people have recourſe by faith to heaven, where the Lord not only, is, but is glorious in his appearings. From whence as he ſeeth how it is with us, ſo he ſeems to have a kind of advantage to relieve us.

But as ſome Scriptures ſeeme to confine God to heaven ſo other Scriptures ſeem to deny that he is every where on earth. Thus *Moſes* ſaid to the people of *Iſraell* (*Numb.* 14. 42.) *Goe not up for the Lord is not among you.* And againe, (*Deut.* 7. 21.) *Thou ſhalt not be affrighted at them, for the Lord thy God is among you*; with ſome the Lord is, with others the Lord is not; and he is with the ſame perſons at one time, not at another; How then can it be ſaid, that the Lord is every where preſent? I anſwer, when *Moſes* ſaith (and many other Texts which ſpeake in the ſame forme) that God was ſometimes with his people, and ſometimes not; we are not to underſtand it at all of a locall preſence, or abſence, but of a favourable preſence or abſence. Thus God is with ſome perſons, and not with others; thus he is ſometime preſent with, ſometime abſent from the ſame perſon. It was this favourable preſence for which *Moſes* did ſo earneſtly entreate the Lord (*Exod.* 33. 15.) *If thy preſence goe not with us, carry us no further*; That is, unleſſe thou pleaſe to be with us, to proſper our way, and protect us in it, let us ſtay where we are. This preſence of God is a high favour indeed, and God is thus preſent but in few places (comparatively) of the whole earth.

Once more, thoſe Scriptures may ſeeme to imply that God is ſo in heaven, that he is not alſo upon the earth, which ſpeak

of

of his coming down from heaven to earth, (*Gen.* 11. 5.) *And the the Lord came downe to ſee the City and the Tower which the Children of men builded.* Whence ſome may inferre, if he came down to ſee the City, then he was not there before, and if ſo, then he is not univerſally preſent in all places. Againe, (*Gen.* 18. 20, 21.) *And the Lord ſaid, becauſe the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and becauſe their ſinne is very grievous, I will goe down now, and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me, and if not, I will know.* This paſſage yeelds the ſame difficulty and objection; To both which we may adde that of *David* (*Pſal.* 14.2.) *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand*; He doth not ſay, God was among the children of men here below, but being in heaven (as a man ſtanding upon a high place or Tower) he looked down.

I anſwer, Theſe Texts ſpeak of God after the manner of men, or they ſpeak thus, not to teach us, how God knowes what is done on earth, but to confirme, and aſſure us that the Lord doth clearely and certainly know whatſoever is done by, or among men on earth, even as clearely and certainly as a man knoweth any thing by his view upon the place. God knoweth all things preſently, without ſearching, though never ſo ſecret, and all things certainly without enquiring, though never ſo doubtfull. God neither aſcends, nor deſcends; He doth not come down by any motion, but he comes down to our apprehenſion. He ſhewes us after our way, that he knoweth, becauſe we cannot conceive his way of knowledge. If I would aſſure another man that I certainely know ſuch a thing, I tell him, I came from the place, I ſaw it, or I beheld it with my own eyes; now that's all that is intended, when 'tis ſaid, The Lord came downe from heaven to behold, and ſee the Tower of *Babell*, and the condition of *Sodom*; Or it is, to admoniſh all Magiſtrates and Judges, that they paſſe no ſentence of puniſhment, either upon places or perſons, upon bare here-ſay and reports, but that they firſt enforme themſelves fully of the matter of fact, as *Job* profeſſed his courſe was in all legall proceedings (*Chap.* 29. 16.) *The cauſe which I knew not I ſearched out.* Thus we ſee notwithſtanding all theſe appearances from Texts of Scripture to the contrary, That this Scripture truth ſtandeth firme. **The Lord is ſo in the height of heaven, that he is every where alſo here upon the earth.**

From which take theſe two Deductions.

First, *Seeing the Lord is every where preſent, we ſhould be every where holy.*

For whereſoever he is, he is the holy Lord; That was the charge which God gave to *Abraham*; *Walk before me, and be upright*; As if he had ſaid, Whereſoever thou walkeſt, walk as having me preſent with thee, and be upright in my preſence. *I* (ſaith *David*, a type of Chriſt, *Pſal.* 16. 8.) *have ſet the Lord alwayes before me, he is at my right hand, I ſhall not be moved.* He that by faith eyes God continually as his protector in trouble, ſhall not be moved with any evill that he ſuffers, and he that eyes God by faith as his pattern in holineſſe, ſhall not be moved from doing that which is good. This thought, *The Lord is at our right hand*, keepes us from turning either to the right hand or to the left. It is ſaid of *Enoch*, that he *walked with God*, (Gen. 5. 22.) and though the Hiſtory of his life be very ſhort, yet 'tis ſaid of him a ſecond time (*ver.* 24.) That he *walked with God*. He walked ſo much with God, that he walked as God, he did not walke (which kinde of walking the Apoſtle reproves, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3) *as men*. He walked ſo little, like the world, that his ſtay was little in the world. *He was not* (ſaith the Text) *for God took him*. He took him from the world to himſelfe, or (as the Author to the *Hebrewes* reports it) *he was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death, for he received this teſtimony that he pleaſed God.*

Secondly, It followeth; if God be every where preſent,

That the godly are never out of the reach of God to help them, and that the wicked are never out of the reach of God to puniſh them.

(*Iſa.* 43. 2.) *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee, and when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt.* The preſence of God is the protection of Saints in the evill which they ſuffer; and they who do evill cannot be hid from his puniſhing preſence. There is no running from God. It is ſaid of *Jonah* (Chap. 1. 3.) *That he fled from the preſence of God.*

Whether fled he? The Text saith he fled to Sea, but did not God find him there? He fled from the commanding presence of God, but he fell into the angry presence of God. We have a large description in the 9 h of *Amos*, how carnall men hope to shift out of the hand of God. *I* (saith the Lord) *will slay the last of them with the sword, though they dig to hell, thence shall my hand take them.* We read what wise counsell the servants of the King of *Benhadad* gave him after he had been defeated by the King of *Israel* (1 *King.* 20. 23, 24. 25.) *Their Gods are Gods of the hills, therefore they were stronger then we, but let us fight against them in the plains, and surely we shall be stronger then they. Make thee an Army like the Army that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and Chariot for Chariot, and we will fight against them in the plain and surely we shall be stronger then they, and he hearkened to their voice and did so.* Why did they desire to fight them upon the plaine? they thought God was a God of the hills, and not of the valleys, but (*ver.* 28.) *A man of God said to the King of Israel, thus saith the Lord, because the Assyrians have said, the Lord is God of the hills, and not of the valleys, therefore will I deliver this great multitude into thy hand.* As if he had said, however you deserve not in the least, that I should own you, or assist your cause, yet that I may confute the blasphemous and derogatory principles of these *Syrians*, I will give you a second victory against them, even in the valleyes, where they suppose they have you at an advantage, and shall deal with you beyond the extent of my power and Territory. Though God had no cause to respect the honour of the *Israelites*, yet he could not forget the honour of his owne name, which was obscured by those superstitious *Syrians*. The most received Doctrine and Divinity of the Heathens confined their Gods to certaine places, some to this City, and some to that, some to the hills, and some to the plains, some to the Sea, others to the Land. 'Tis said that the same night in which *Alexander* the Great (of whose Conquests *Daniel* Prophesied) was borne, that the Temple of *Diana* at *Ephesus* was burnt to the ground. And the Heathens gave this as the reason of it, because *Diana* was absent from her Temple, being gone to assist at the birth of *Alexander*; implying that their Goddesse was so in one place, as she could not attend what was done elsewhere. Such were the grosse conceits which they had of

of their Gods, and they imagined the God of *Israel* to be such a one, as their owne. The veriest Idolater in the world presumes his God as good as any is. But Jehova the living God hath taught us to say, *Who is a God like unto thee?* and our experiences have sealed to it, that *there is none like the God of Jesurun, who rideth on the heavens for thy helpe, and in his excellency on the skyes* (*Deut.* 33.26.) And we have learned to comfort our selves in all places and streights, in this assurance, that he is the *God of the hills, as well as of the valleys, of the Sea, as well as the dry Land, and that he is as truly present in the lowest depths, as in the highest heavens. Is not God in the height of heaven?*

And behold the height of the Starres how high they are.

The Hebrew is, *Behold the head of the Starres*; The head of a man is the highest part of him, and the head of any thing is the top of it. *Behold the head or height of the Starres how high they are;* Starres are high, but God is higher; many creatures are high, but God is high above all creatures. The creature is strong, but God is stronger, the creature is wise, but God is wiser, the creature is glorious, but God is infinitely more glorious; The glory, wisdome, strength, and highest height of the creature, is but a glimpse of what God is. *The Starres are high.* I shall not enter into an Astronomicall Discourse about the Starres, or the height of Starres. I shall not meddle with a *Jacobs staffe*, to take the elevation of the Starres, no need of such Discourse here, all that is intended by *Eliphaz*, is a proofe that God is infinitely exalted in his highnesse and majesty above the Stars.

Behold the height of the Starres how high they are.

This word *behold* in Scripture is often applyed to things of *wonder*; To say, *behold*, is not a calling for the bare act of the eye to see the height of the Starres, but it calls for a worke of the minde, duly to consider of, and to wonder at their height. Some creatures, especially the heavenly, are not onely usefull, but wonderfull, and 'tis as hard to understand them, as it is comfortable to enjoy them. The Hebrew word for *Heaven* cometh from a roote which signifies to amaze and astonish; And indeed there are naturall wonders and mysteries enow in the heavens to astonish any considering man, And the true rea-

ſon why we are no more aſtoniſht at them, or doe no more admire them, is becauſe we doe ſo little conſider them. We often *ſee* or *look* upon the Starres, but we ſeldome *behold* them. And therefore *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 8.3.) *When I conſider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Starres which thou haſt ordained, what is man that thou art mindfull of him?* As the beholding and conſideration of our owne works will make us aſhamed, becauſe they appear ſo bad, ſo the conſideration and beholding of the works of God will make us aſtoniſht, becauſe they appear both ſo good and great. *Behold* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1.) what manner of love the father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God; even this tranſcendent Love of God in our Adoption is paſſed by as a ſmall matter, by thoſe who will not take the paines (or rather the pleaſure) and leyſure to behold and conſider the manner of it. No mervaile if the power of God in making the higheſt Starres, be paſſed by as a low thing, by thoſe who doe not behold, that is, diligently conſider them.

Behold the height of the Starres how high they are.

We are called to conſider this.
Hence note,

That it is our duty to contemplate the excellency of the creature.

God hath not onely given us the book of the Scripture, but of the creature, and we muſt attend to the reading of this as well as of that, even to the reading of every leaſe and line of it. There are foure great leaves of this booke. Firſt, the heavens; ſecondly, the earth; thirdly, the Sea; fourthly, the aire. Theſe are the foure great leaves of this book of the creature; in every one of which we ſhould labour to be expert Scholars, and ſpell out the name and mind of God in them. For though (as I ſaid before) beholding notes wondering, yet we muſt not behold them to wonder at them, like children; but we muſt behold them to learn ſomewhat from them, or to be inſtructed by them as men.

Behold the Starres.

Firſt, In their number; As God ſaid to *Abraham* (*Gen.* 15. 5.) *Looke now towards Heaven, and tell the Starres if thou be able to number them; and he ſaid unto him, ſo ſhall thy ſeed be.* 'Tis matter of wonder that God ſhould make ſo many of thoſe eminent Lights, that he ſhould ſet up ſo many flaming torches in heaven for man to ſee his way, and work by on earth. That God who hath ſpread this Canopie over our heads, ſhould alſo embroyder it with ſuch a multitude of Golden ſpangles, which render it as much our delight, as it is our duty, to behold them.

Secondly, Behold the Starres in their order, they move by rule, they keep their rankes, none of them goe out of their place, or forſake their ſtation. They who are skilled in the motion of the Starres, know where to have them a hundred years hence. In the 5th of *Judges*, it is ſaid, *The Starres in their courſes fought againſt Siſera.*

Thirdly, We ſhould conſider the Starres in their magnitude, what vaſt bodyes they are; Some of them are bigger then the whole body of the earth (as Philoſophy teacheth us) though, to appearance not bigger then the blaſe of a candle, nor broader then the palme of a hand.

Fourthly, Conſider alſo the difference of the Starres in their greatneſſe, and magnitude, they are all great, but not all of a greatneſſe, not all of one ſize. Aſtronomers divide the Starres into ſix magnitudes. We ſhould likewiſe obſerve, and wonder at their light, which is their glory: the light of the Starres is the glory of the Starres, and ſo the more light any Starre hath, the more glory it hath. Thus *one Starre differeth from another Starre in glory* (1 Cor. 15. 41.) But I ſhall not ſtay upon theſe things, having inſiſted ſomewhat largely upon them at the 9th Chapter, *v.* 9. Whether I referre the Reader. Onely note here, that as the Starres of heaven are of ſeverall degrees; God hath not levell'd them, either in light or magnitude: ſo he hath diverſly diſtributed the light of parts, and gifts, of underſtanding, and knowledge, of eſtate and power, to and among the children of men here on earth. 'Tis good for all, that all are not alike; The univerſe could not be either ſo beautifull, or ſo orderly, if every particular had the ſame beauty, or were of the ſame order. And he that cannot be content to have leſſe, and to be leſſer then another, is altogether unfit, not

not onely to be as great, or to have as much as another, but to be or have any thing at all. Nor is any man more fit to be more then he is, then he that can rejoyce while another is more then he.

Secondly, Note;

The creature leads us to God.

That's the tendency and scope of all that is here asserted. *Eliphaz* calls not *Job* to the meditation, or contemplation of the Starres to leave him there. Some study the heavens much, but their lives are earthly; they study the Starres, yet there is nothing but dirt in their hearts, and the reason is, because they study the Starres, for the Starres sake, and not for Gods sake, and make the Starres their end, not their way, or as Starres, to lead them to God. This is the reason why many Astronomers and Philosophers, who busie their heads and minds much in speculation about the nature of the heavenly bodyes, know not at all what it is to have their conversations in heaven, or to minde the things that are above. We should so behold the glory of the Starres, as from thence to inferre, that God is much more glorious, yea, that, these things which were made glorious, have no glory in comparison of that Glory which made them. *Plato* taught his Schollers to say; *The earth is beautifull, the heavens are more beautifull, but God who made the earth, and the heavens, is more beautifull then both.* The visible creature shewes the invisible God (*Psal.* 19. 1, 2.) *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy worke.* But O how glorious is the invisible God, who hath made such visible creatures? and what a worke-Master is he who hath set up such a work? (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearely seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and god-head.* The things that are made, carry us to the maker of them, and they tell us, that none but he who hath an eternall power and god head, could possibly make them. The Heathen thought the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, to be Gods, therefore certainly there is very much of God, much of the glory and power of God to be seen in them. And *Job* saith (which doth plainly shew that in nature it is so, (*v.* 31. 26.)

If

If I beheld the Sunne when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightnesse, and my heart hath been secretly inticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge, for I should have denyed the God that is above. That is, if I have been inticed to worship the Sunne, or Moone, as ravisht with their beauty (for 'tis so farre from being a sin, that 'tis a duty to behold the Sunne when it shineth, and the Moone walking in brightnesse, but so to behold them, as to adore them, or do obeysance to them, (which was the custome of the Heathen, expressed it seemes among them by kissing their hand, as we doe at this day in token of respect and reverence to men above us) this is an iniquity, even that grosse iniquity of Idolatry, or *worshiping the creature instead of, or more then the Creator, who is blessed for evermore.* Now (I say) inasmuch as these creatures have so much of God in them, that many Heathens have mistaken them for God, how will it condemne us of dulnesse and stupidity, if we be not led to God in the knowledge and beholding of them? For as to make these creatures Gods, so not to see God in these creatures, is to deny the God that is above.

Thirdly, While we behold the Starres of heaven, it should exceedingly both humble us and make us thankfull, for whose use, comfort, and accommodation in this life, God set up those Glorious Lights. God did not make them for his owne use, he had no need of them, he was from everlasting without any of these creatures. The Starres are nothing to him; The Sunne is nothing to him; yea in that state of glory where we shall injoy God for ever, we shall have light without Sunne; so that these lights were made for our use, and for ours onely while we are walking in the darke vale of this present world. Now, while we *behold the height of the Starres how high they are,* and consider for whom as well as by whom they were made; even for us, for poore us, who are but dust and ashes: This should at once lay us low in humblenesse (looking upon them as an honour too great for us) and raise us up in thankfulnesse, because the benefit and comfort of them is so great to us. Thus *David* speakes in that excellent prophecy of Christ (*Psal.* 8. 3.) *When I consider thy heavens the worke of thy fingers, the Moon, and the Stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindfull*

full of him, and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him? As if he had ſaid, thou haſt made all theſe creatures for man; ſee what a heaven, what ſtarrs God hath framed, and ſet up for man. *Lord, what is man that thou art mindfull of him?* Thus *behold the height of the ſtarres, how high they are*; as to lead thee unto God, and to admire his highneſſe, ſo to be humbled at thy own baſeneſſe, and to be thankfull for his benefits.

Eliphaz having laid down theſe two Propoſitions, *God is on high, and the Starres are high*, proceeds to make an inference from both, which he formeth up (by way of ſuppoſition) from *Jobs* own mouth.

Verſ. 13. *And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?*

As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, thou art ſo far from making that right improvement which thou oughteſt of theſe truths, that the Lord is in the height of heaven, and that he hath made thoſe high and glorious lights in heaven, that indeed thou doeſt quite pervert his meaning in making them; *Thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* Inſtead of honouring God who formed theſe lights, thou art darkning his honour, and eclipſing the light of his omniſcience. For whereas thou ſhouldeſt have ſaid, ſeeing God is on high, and hath made the Starres, which are ſo high, ſurely nothing can be hid from his knowledge, Thou ſayeſt, *How doth God know?* And there is a twofold ſaying of this; firſt, a ſaying with the tongue; ſecondly, with the heart; The vaine heart of man hath many ſayings, and this among the reſt, *How doth God know?* (*Pſal.* 14. 1.) *The foole hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God.* And he that ſaith in his heart, *How doth God know?* ſpeakes as fooliſhly as that foole doth, who ſaith, *There is no God.* To deny that or doubt whether God knoweth all things, is not onely to doubt, but to deny that God is at all; He is not God who knoweth not all things.

Dicit 1 verbis prolatis 2 mentis cogitatione & falſa perſuaſione.

And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know? The conjunctive particle *And*, is here put as a cauſal, *And thou ſayeſt*; that is, *therefore thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* So the ſenſe is more cleare, *Is not God in the height of heaven*, &c. He is. And what then? The uſe thou makeſt of it is this; *Thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* ſo the particle

particle is uſed (*Gen.* 49. 16.) *He ſaw that reſt was good, and he gave his ſhoulders to the burthen*, &c. that is, *therefore he gave his ſhoulders to the burthen.*

Thou ſayeſt, How doth God know?

We may anſwer; Firſt, Negatively, Not by ſence, as we; eyes and eares are aſcribed to God improperly in Scripture; nor doth God know by diſcourſe, drawing one thing from another; but in the Affirmative, he knowes intuitively, he knowes every thing nakedly in it ſelfe.

Againe, Some read, *What doth God know?* how farre doth his eye extend? what are the objects of his knowledge? To this we may anſwer, God knoweth all things; even the hearts of all the children of men; There are no ſecrets to God. But whether we expound it of the manner or matter of divine knowledge, the ſence is the ſame, either an affirmation that God did not know all things, or at leaſt a doubt whether he did or no. *Thou ſayeſt, How doth God know?* But where, and when did *Job* ſay this? *Job* might challenge *Eliphaz*; bring your prooфes and witneſſes againſt me; why doe you impute ſuch thoughts to me, and frame ſuch imaginations in my breaſt? certainely *Job* never ſpake this, and as ſurely *Job* never thought this, yet *Eliphaz* puts it directly upon him. What was his ground? onely as the former crimes of uncharitableneſſe and injuſtice, his breaking the armes of the fatherleſſe, &c. were faſtned upon him, becauſe of the feares, ſnares, and darkneſſe, in which he was; as if he muſt needs have done thoſe evills, becauſe he endured ſo much evill. *Jobs* ſufferings were great, and therefore according to the Logicke of *Eliphaz*, his ſinnes muſt needs be very great. So here, he hath onely this to prove his ſuppoſition, that *Job* ſaid, *How doth God know?* becauſe *Job* had ſaid, that God doth ſometime proſper wicked men, and afflicts the righteous. As if he who ſaith, that God ſuffers wicked men to proſper in this life, muſt needs alſo ſay, that God regards not the things of this life; ſo that *Eliphaz* ſeemes to ſpeake thus; *We have heard thee ſaying, that the wicked proſper, and that the godly are afflicted*; what need we any further witneſſe, that thy opinion is, *God neither takes notice nor care of the things here below.* Out of thine owne mouth we condemne

Exiſtimabet hæc conſequi ex Jobi dictis, quæſt neceſſe ſit eum qui dicat improbos proſpere agere, exiſtimare etiam deum res humanas non curare. Merl.

thee as Guilty of this blaſphemy, That, *Thou ſayeſt, How doth God know?*

Hence obſerve;

Firſt, *That good men are ſometimes charged with ſaying and doing the worſt and vileſt things.*

Thus (1 *King.* 21. 13.) *Nabeth* was accuſed of *blaſpheming God and the King.* Chriſt himſelfe was taxed with blaſphemy more then once (*Matth.* 9 3.) *And behold certaine of the Scribes ſaid within themſelves this man blaſphemes.* There they did not only averre it, but they ſaid it within themſelves. At other times they ſpake it openly (*Joh.* 10. 33.) *The Jewes anſwered and ſaid, for a good deed we ſtone thee not, but for blaſphemy, becauſe thou being a man makeſt thy ſelfe God.* And againe, (*Matth.* 26 65.) *He hath ſpoken blaſphemy, ye have heard his blaſphemy.* To ſpeake or do well and heare ill was the portion of Chriſt, and may be the portion of the holyeſt of thoſe who are Chriſts.

Secondly, Note,

That when men are heated in diſpute, they are apt to make falſe inferences from the tenets and ſayings of their oppoſers.

Eliphaz ſaith, *Job* denyed providence, whereas *Job* adored it; that he denyed Gods knowledge of the good and evill done in the world, becauſe he maintained, that good men receive evill, and evill men good in the world. When we deny tranſubſtantiation, or that the bread is changed into the very ſubſtance of the body of Chriſt; Papiſts inferre, that we deny, that Chriſt ſpake truely, when at his Laſt Supper he ſaid, *This is my body*; and they will hence force it upon us, that we ſay, *God is not omnipotent*, becauſe we affirme that it is inconſiſtent with the nature of a true humane body (ſuch as Chriſt hath now in heaven, though glorified and ſpirituall) to be in many places at once. For as ſome deny the omni-preſence of the divine nature, ſo Papiſts affirme the omni-preſence of the humane nature, And (ſay they) while we deny this, we deny the omnipotency of God. Others charge us that we make God the author of ſinne, and that, according to our tenet, all the impiety and wickedneſſe that is in the world, lyeth at his doore; becauſe we affirme, That God hath paſſed an Eternall abſolute and

and unchangeable decree concerning all the ſonnes of men. When all other arguments fayle, how uſuall is it to make the divineſt truths guilty of the moſt uncomely and ugly conſequences that are imaginable.

Further, Thou ſayeſt, *How doth God know?* Take it either of the inward or of the outward ſaying, either of the tongue or of the heart, ſaying ſo; *Eliphaz* would prove from it, that certainly *Job* was a wicked man. And his inference had been true, if he could have proved it true, that *Job* had ſaid ſo.

Hence obſerve;

That to have evill thoughts, or to ſpeak evill of God, is the character of a wicked man.

He that is good, muſt needs both thinke, and ſpeake good of God. *David* doth often aggravate the wickedneſſe of his enemies, from the language of their hearts and tongues, (Pſal. 10. 11.) *He hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hides his face, he will never ſee.* And againe (*Pſ.* 144. 7, 8 11.) *Send thy hand from above, rid me and deliver me out of great waters, from the hands of ſtrange children, whoſe mouth ſpeaketh vanity, and their right hand, is a right hand of falſehood.* If the mouth ſpeaketh vanity, the hand is full of falſehood; we may even feele deceit in their hands, whoſe mouths ſpeake any kinde of vanity, but eſpecially this, which is the vaineſt vanity of all, *How doth God know?* or ſurely God doth not know. Such the Pſalmiſt rebukes (Pſal. 94. 4, 5. 7.) *How long ſhall they utter and ſpeak hard things?* What things were thoſe? The next words ſhew us; *They brake in peeces thy people,* &c. *yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee,* &c. *underſtand ye brutiſh, among the people, he that formed the eye ſhall he not ſee?* There is no greater argument of brutiſhneſſe and ignorance, then to queſtion the knowledge of God; or to ſay, *How doth God know?*

And (which is the ſame in other words) *can he judge through the darke cloud.*

As if *Job* had further argued thus; I am ſafe enough from the knowledge of God, for as he is high above me, ſo there are dark clouds between him and me; *Can he judge through the dark cloud?* My opinion is he cannot. For knowledge goeth be-

Si non novit ergo nec judicare poteſt, ad rectũ enim judicii requiritur cognitio cauſæ.

fore judgement; He that knoweth not certainly, can never judge rightly. Juſtice is pictured blind, in reference to perſons, but not in reference to things or cauſes; Juſtice muſt take no notice of this or that man, whether he be great or little, high or low, a neere friend or a ſtranger; Juſtice is blinde as to all theſe conſiderations, and knoweth no man; but juſtice muſt know every mans caſe and cauſe; unleſſe man know that, how can he judge? and if God know not that, how can he judge? He muſt have light to ſee what is done, before he paſſe Sentence upon what is done; therefore, *Can he judge through the dark cloud?* Surely he cannot. Thus the Atheiſt concludeth indeed: and thus *Eliphaz* repreſents *Job* concluding in his owne heart; there is not onely a great diſtance between God and me, not onely is he in the height of heaven, and I below on earth, but there are many gloomy clouds between him and me; As he is high above me, ſo there are ſuch impediments in the way that he cannot ſee me. The Vulgar reads, *He judgeth as through darkneſſe.* Now the beſt of Saints *ſee God through a gluſſe darkly, or in a vidle* (1 Cor. 13. 12.) And ſecure ſinners thinke that God ſeeth them onely through a cloud darkly, or (as *Eliphaz* ſpeaketh) *through a dark cloud*, he knoweth not clearly but dimly. To judge through a cloud, is to judge of things confuſedly, not diſtinctly, by gueſſe or conjecturally, not exactly or face to face. This is all the light which an evill heart alloweth God (if he allow him any) concerning his wayes and actions. They who doe things which cannot abide the light, are willing to beleeve that all they doe is in the darke. Theirs are works of morall darkneſſe, and therefore they pleaſe themſelves with thinking that their works are hid either in naturall or artificiall darkneſſe. It is ſaid of the Lord in Scripture (*Pſal.* 97. 2.) *Clouds and darkneſſe are round about him, while judgement and righte uſneſſe are the habitation of his throne*; but theſe imagine that God cannot proceed in judgement and righteouſneſſe, becauſe clouds and darkneſſe are round about him. It is ſaid (1 *King.* 8. 10, 11, 12.) *The cloud filled the houſe of the Lord, ſo that the Prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter becauſe of the cloud for the glory of the Lord filled the houſe of the Lord. Then ſpake Solomon, the Lord ſaid that he will dwell in the thick darkneſſe.* Read *Exod.* 20. 21. *Deut.* 5. 2.

Et quaſi per caliginem judicat. Vulg.

Pſal.

Pſal. 18. 11. *God is light* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *John* 1 *Ep:* 1) *and he dwelleth in light which no man can approach unt* (1 Tim. 6. 16) How then can he be ſaid to dwell in thick darkneſſe? I anſwer; thoſe Scriptures which ſay that God dwells in darkneſſe, that clouds and darkneſſe are round about him, teach us, that God and his wayes are much hid from us; we are not able to looke up to him, or ſee clearely what he doth, much leſſe can we ſee what his counſells are. The clouds and darkneſſe which are about him, do not hinder his ſight of us, but our ſight of him. Our darkneſſe is no darkneſſe to him, but his darkneſſe, yea his light is darkneſſe to us. Againe, God is ſaid to dwell in a cloud, to reprove our boldneſſe and curioſity, who are too apt to pry into what is not to be knowne, and to neglect our duty in what we know, or to neglect the knowledge of our duty. God hath ſome reſerves in counſells; ſome of his providences are wrapt up in clouds. He will be truſted and honoured in what he is not teene or knowne. Not to know theſe things is indeed our neſcience, but not our ignorance, and not to ſeeke after the knowledge of theſe things, is our duty, not our ſloath. Thus God who dwels in light, dwels alſo in a cloud; for he *dwells in light that no man can* (no nor ought to) *approach unto.* We may come neere his light by faith, but we cannot come neere his light by knowledge. There is ſuch an Infinite, ſuch an overcomming light in God, that it is a darkneſſe to us; the moſt Eagle-like eyes of a humane underſtanding are not onely dazzel'd, but quite blinded with his brightneſſe. Now as no man can judge through this light of God, ſo ſome men are ready to ſay (and thus *Eliphaz* brings in *Job* ſaying) that God cannot judge through dark clouds, through clouds and darkneſſe. Neither *Eliphaz* bring in *Job* ſaying this only by way of doubt or queſtion, but by way of averrement and reſolution in the next verſe.

Verſ. 14. *Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he ſeeth it not.*

This verſe is but an explication of the 13th, *Can he ſee through the darke cloud?* There he puts the queſtion, here he gives a peremptory anſwer, he cannot certainely; for, *Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he cannot ſee.* The Hebrew for *thick clouds*

עבים *nubes dictæ ſunt a denſitate a radice* עבה *denſum eſſe. q. d. ſicut nos latet deus, ita deum latent noſtra, cœleſtia, illi tantum patent.*

cl.uds is but one word, which in the roote, ſignifies *Thickneſſe*, or, *to be thicke*. Some clouds have a kind of thinneſſe in them, and are as it were tranſparent. Others are more groſſe and opacous, quite hindering and intercepting our ſight of all that is beyond them, with theſe (ſaith *Eliphaz*) thou O *Job*, vainly conceiteſt, that the ſight of God alſo is intercepted, ſo that, as we cannot ſee God, ſo God cannot ſee us; A vayle of thick clouds ſeclude his ſight. Nor is this the only reaſon why thou art overcome with this ignorant perſwaſion. Thou haſt a ſecond, which though poſſibly thou wouldeſt conceale, yet will not I, and this is it, Thou alſo ſayeſt,

He walketh in the circuit of heaven.] As if thou hadſt ſaid, ſuppoſe God can ſee through the thick cloud; and ſo my former reaſon ſhould fayle, yet I know well enough that the Great God of heaven hath other matters to meddle with, other affaires to buſie himſelfe abour, then to trouble himſelfe with me. *He walketh in the circuit of heaven*; we are not to take *walking* as a meere motion, but as *walking* notes imployment, *he walkes in the circuit of heaven*, that is, he is wholly taken up there. When the Lord asked of Satan, *Whence comeſt thou?* he anſwered, *From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and downe in it.* Now what doth Satan when he walks up and downe the world, doth he walke like an idle vagrant that hath nothing to doe? doth he walke with his hands in his pockets, as having no buſineſſe? doth he walke meerly to take the aire, or to take his pleaſure, to ſee, and be ſeene? no, when Satan walks about the world, *his walking is working*, he goeth about to tempt, to try, to lay ſnares and baits, to catch and captivate the ſoules of men. So here when it is ſaid, *God walketh in the circuit of heaven*, the meaning is his buſineſſe, yea even his whole buſineſſe lyes there; He hath enough to do in heaven, and therefore hath no leyſure to attend what is done on earth. That's the ſcope and tendency of theſe words which *Eliphaz* faſtens upon *Job*; *He walketh in the circuit of heaven.* We are ſure enough of him. The words carry the ſame ſence, with that ſpeech of the whoriſh woman (Pro. 7. 18, 19 20.) *Come* (ſaith ſhe) *let us take our fill of love till the morning, let us ſolace our ſelves with loves.* But the young man might poſſibly object, your husband will come home, and that will ſpoyle all.

Hic verbo videtur connotari ſtudium inquirendi. Pisc.

all. No, (ſaith ſhe) never feare it, he is farre enough out of the way; *The good man is not at home, he is gone a long journey; He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed*; That is, he will not come home till the day appointed, he hath gaeat buſineſſe abroad, and he hath carried money enough with him to beare his charges till he hath done his buſineſſe. He is riding and running in a farre Country and minds not home, nor hath he the leaſt ſuſpition of what we doe at home. Thus when the ſinner is about to depart farre from his duty, he puts or conceives God farre from him. *He walketh in the circuit of heaven.* From the Generall ſcope of *Eliphaz* in the 13th and 14th verſes, Obſerve:

Firſt, *Carnal men frame conceptions of God like themſelves.*

Thus the hypocrite is deſcribed (Pſal. 50. 21.) *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelfe.* Not that he thought God was a man, but that God had ſuch thoughts of good and evill, as man hath. As if what is right in mans eyes, were ſo in the eyes of God alſo; or as if what did not diſpleaſe man, were pleaſing, or not much diſpleaſing unto God. When the Lord ſaith (*Eſay.* 55. 8.) *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your wayes my wayes*; he doth plainly intimate, that they did begin to frame thoughts of God like their owne: but ſaith God, *as the heavens are higher then the earth, ſo are my thoughts then your thoughts, and my wayes then your wayes*; That is, as my thoughts have a vaſtneſſe in them to all things beyond yours, ſo eſpecially in this thing, the performance of my promiſe for the pardon of ſinne. O how unlike is God to man in this? God is not more unlike man in his abſolute freedome from the leaſt inclination to commit any, the leaſt ſin, then he is in the admirable freeneſſe of his inclination to pardon any, even the greateſt ſinne. Men are commonly not onely unmerciſull to thoſe who wrong them, but revengefull, and when once offended are hardly drawne to a reconcilement, and ſeldome ſo fully reconciled, but that ſomewhat of offence ſtayeth behinde. But the thoughts of God are not ſo. He is ſlow to wrath, and ready to forgive. He quickly pardons the offence, and receives the offender into favour; no more retaining the memory of his offence (as to his hurt) then if he had never

never offended. Thus the Lord would aſſure ſinners, that his thoughts in pardoning ſinne are not as theirs. And it is but need he ſhould doe ſo; For when ſinners begin to be awakened, they frame ſuch thoughts of God, as to pardon of ſin, as they have in themſelves: when they looke upon their ſinnes as too bigg to be pardoned by man, they conclude preſently the Lord cannot or will not pardon them. And as many under temptation, frame thoughts of God like their own about the pardon of ſinne; ſo it is the conſtant courſe of wicked men (which is indeed the worſt of their ſinnes) to frame thoughts of God like unto themſelves, while they commit and continue in ſinne. Man ſhould not dare to Imagine any thing of God in reference either to his juſtice or mercy, either about the puniſhing or pardoning of ſinne, but what he hath declared of himſelfe, all that we Imagine beſide that, is the making of another God. There are many falſe gods made with mens hands, but the hearts of men make many more. The heart of man makes thouſands of falſe or ſtrange gods. Every undue, every wrong Imagination of God, is the forming up of a ſtrange, of a new god. When we aſcribe to God ſuch a kinde of power, ſuch a kinde of knowledge, ſuch a kinde of holineſſe, ſuch a kinde of juſtice, ſuch a kinde of mercy, as is common to the creature, in all this we frame up a new god to our ſelves. And thus thoſe Gentiles of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks (Rom. 1. 21. & 25.) *Became vain in their Imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkned*; in what was their fooliſh heart darkned? in falſe notions of God; therefore they are ſaid (ver. 29.) *to change the glory of the Incorruptible God, into an Image made like to Corruptible man, and to birds, foure footed beaſts, and creeping things.* Now as there is the changing of the glory of the Incorruptible God into the Image of a Corruptible man, that is, into the Externall Image of a Corruptible man, (for ſome ſet up falſe gods in the likeneſſe of men;) So there is a Changing of the glory of the Incorruptible God, into the Internall Image of a Corruptible man, that is, into ſuch thoughts and Conceptions as are ordinarily in men. Let ſuch conſider, that, if to make a worſhip of our owne for the true God, be indeed to ſet up a falſe god; (all they worſhip falſe gods who ſet up a ſtrange worſhip for the true God, now, I ſay,

ſay, if they who doe but ſet up a new worſhip for the true God make a ſtrange God) what then doe they who in their hearts ſet up a new God, that is, who frame Conceptions of God which himſelfe never gave ground for in his word? Such was the Conceit which *Eliphaz* had of *Job*, when he preſumes him ſaying, *How doth God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud?*

Secondly, From the particular miſapprehenſion of God impoſed by *Eliphaz* upon *Job*; *And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* &c. Obſerve,

Sinfull men fancy to themſelves that God either doth not or cannot take notice of them in their ſinfull wayes.

Thus they reaſon; *Can he ſee through the dark Cloud?* and conclude, *Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he ſeeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven?* What *Eliphaz* layes to *Jobes* charge falſly; is often charged by the holy Ghoſt upon wicked men truly. (*Pſal.* 10. 11.) *He hath ſaid in his heart God hath forgotten, he hides his face, he will never ſee it.* Who this *He* is, whoſe heart ſpeakes this language, appeares clearly in the former part of the Pſalme, where he is more then once called *The wicked* (*ver.* 2, 3.) and where more then one of his wickedneſſes are deſcribed, (*ver.* 7, 8, 9, 10.) *His mouth is full of curſing and deceit, and fraud, under his tongue is miſchiefe and vanity, he ſitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the ſecret places doth he murther the innocent* &c. After all this, he *ſayth in his heart God hath forgotten*, that is, he hath forgotten the poor whom I have under my power, therefore I may ſafely oppreſſe them. *He hideth his face, he will never ſee it*; that is, God will never take any knowledge, either of my doings or of their ſufferings. We have a ſample of the ſame impiety (*Pſal.* 73. 11.) *And they ſay how doth God know? and is there knowledge in the moſt high? behold, theſe are the ungodly in the world*, &c. And again (*Pſ.* 94. 6. *verſ.*) *They ſlay the widdow, and ſtranger, and murther the fatherleſſe* (here are their workes of darkneſſe) *yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard.* Not only did they preſume that the Lord did not ſee, but that he ſhould not; *The Lord ſhall not ſee!* As if they could ſtop or blind the eyes of God as eaſily as they had blinded their owne Conſciences. Take one inſtance further (*Ezek.* 8. 12.) *Then ſaid he*

unto me Son of man, Seeſt thou what they doe? haſt thou ſeene what the Ancients of the houſe of Iſrael doe in the darke, Every man in the Chambers of his Imagery, for they ſay the Lord ſeeth us not, he hath forſaken the Earth. Much like the language here, *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven*; he hath other buſineſſe to doe then to minde us. As God is ſometimes ſaid to forſake the Earth in wrath, to puniſh the ſin of Man, ſo wicked men ſay he alwayes forſakes the earth in neglect both of their ſin and puniſhment. And as Idolaters who have a minde to other gods, are willing to beleeve that God hath forſaken the earth, as to the protection of them; We (ſay they) are in danger, God takes no care of us, therefore blame us not if we betake our ſelves to other Gods for protection; *If he had not forſaken us, we had not forſaken him*: So all ſorts of reſolved tranſgreſſors, who have a minde to any ſinfull way, are willing to beleeve that God hath forſaken the earth, as to any obſervation of them. We may doe what we liſt, for God doth not minde or regard what we are doing. If we thought he did indeed ſee us, we durſt not thus ſin againſt him. But ſeeing he doth not trouble himſelfe with any care about us, why ſhould we trouble our ſelves with any fear about him? Now, this *Preſumption that God doth not ſee us in what we are doing, opens a doore to the doing of all Evill.* Security from danger is the great encouragement unto ſin. Though wicked men would not be leſſe ſinfull, yet they would not ſin ſo much, or be ſo full of ſin, did they not vainly flatter themſelves out of the ſight of God. Every man would faine beleeve that God doth not ſee him when he is doing that which he would not have ſeene or be ſeene in doing it. And how doe men pleaſe themſelves in this falſe hope that God doth not ſee them, when they doe that which is diſpleaſing unto God!

From the intendment of *Eliphaz* to convince *Job*, that the Clouds are no covering to God, and that the Circuit of Heaven doth not Confine him.

Obſerve;

Thirdly, *God is omniſcient, he knows all things.*

Thou ſayeſt thus; *How doth God know?* I tell thee God doth know; And thou haſt an argument upon thy backe, if thou haſt none

none in thy heart to prove it, thy ſence or feeling may teach thee, if thy reaſon or underſtanding doe not, and by thy ſuffering thou mayſt ſee that God ſeeth what thou haſt been doing. This great truth, *That God is omniſcient, or knowes all*, may eaſily be knowne, and ought to be beleeved by all. When the Lord had made the world in ſix dayes (*Gen.* 1. 31.) *He ſaw all that he had made*; All was in view at once, he had a Proſpect of the whole creation in his eye. And as all his owne Creatures, ſo all our Creatures are ſeen by God; he ſeeth all that himſelfe hath made, and he ſeeth all that we have made, or are making day by day. (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *God ſaw that the wickedneſſe of man was great in the Earth, and that every thought of the Imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evill Continually, or every day. The Lord ſaw*, that is, the Lord knew fully (infinitely more fully then we know thoſe things which we ſee) every Imagination or figment of the thoughts of mans heart. The figment of our thoughts, is what the minde faſhioneth or maketh up within it ſelfe by thinking: corrupt nature keepes a conſtant mint of evill imaginations in the head, as it hath a ſinke of filthy affections in the heart. The minde of man hath a formative faculty in it. And the ſame word which the Holy Ghoſt uſeth to ſignifie the worke of God in making man, (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *The Lord God formeth man out of the duſt of the earth, or duſt out of the earth* (the ſame word, I ſay) is uſed in the Noune (*Gen.* 6. 5.) to ſignifie, *the imagination of man*, becauſe that is alwayes ſhaping moulding or forming one ſort of thoughts or other, and, naturally, none but ugly evill thoughts. Theſe are the creatures which man (as fallen) is the maker of; and he maketh (as I may ſay) infinite creatures, he is forming them continually in his imagination, that's the ſhop wherein there's a dayly Creation (ſuch as it is) of monſtrous wickedneſſes, till God by his new Creation changeth the frame and nature of it. Now (I ſay) as God ſeeth his own Creatures; ſo he ſeeth all our Creatures, though we make them in the ſhop of our darkeſt imaginations. And much more doth he ſee all the Creatures which we make without, that is, all our bodily and externall actions. (*Jere.* 17. 10.) *I the Lord ſearch the heart, I try the reynes*; if he ſearch our hearts, then ſurely he ſearcheth all our wayes, if he ſeeth our thinkings, then ſurely

Deus ſcientiarum, plurale, perfectam ſcientiam & totum omnium cognoſcibilium cognitionem indicat.

he ſeeth our walkings. Therefore 'tis ſaid (*1 Sam. 2. 3.*) *The Lord is a God of knowledge*; the Hebrew is, *The Lord is a God of knowledges*; that is, all things fall under his knowledge; he is perfect in all knowledges, there is nothing knowable, but the Lord knowes it; *and by him actions are weighed*: now the weighing of actions is more then the ſeeing of actions; many ſee that which they cannot weigh. *He weigheth actions*, that is, he takes not only the action it ſelfe, but every circumſtance of it into Conſideration; he takes his ballances, and tryes fully, how much each ingredient weighes, and what it comes to. He weighs whole States, Kingdomes, and Nations. So it was ſaid to the Babylonian Monarch *Belteſhazzar* (*Dan. 5. 26, 27.*) Mene, *God hath numbred thy Kingdome and finiſhed it*, Tekel, *Thou art weighed in the ballances, and art found wanting*. Thy councels, thy policies, thy undertakings, the whole compaſſe, all the contrivances of thy Government are weighed and found too light. And as God weigheth the actions of Princes, ſo of private perſons. (*Prov. 5. 21.*) *The wayes of a man* (that is, of every man, even of the meaneſt man) *are before the Lord, and he pondereth all his pathes*; he puts them into a Ballance, and doth not only ſee them, but ponder or weigh them. *David* ſaith of ſome wicked men that they weigh the violence of their hands in the earth (*Pſal. 58. 2.*) though they doe violence, yet they doe it not violently, but with a kinde of skill and deliberation. They doe wrong and oppreſſe with a ſhew of Juſtice, whereof weightes are the common Embleme. Now as ſome men doe evill, not haſtily, raſhly, or all at once, but give it out by weight, and with a ſeeming gravity and zeale for Juſtice. So the Lord doth never looke over the wayes of men raſhly or haſtily, but weighs them out even to a graine, yea to the duſt of the ballance he pondereth all their pathes. That is, he knowes them throughout. Therefore *David* (*Pſal. 139.*) having ſpoken much to this poynt of the Exactneſſe of Gods knowledge, concludes at the 6th verſe; *Such knowledge is too wonderfull for me, it is high I cannot attaine unto it.* Some expound this Text, not of the knowledge of God concerning us, but of our knowledge concerning God. *Thy knowledge or the knowledge of thee is too wonderfull for me, I cannot attaine unto it.* Others thus; *This thy knowledge* (namely that which he had before

before deſcribed) *is more wonderfull* (or more exact) *then that I ſhould be able to deceive it*. We may impoſe upon and deceive the moſt knowing man, but we cannot impoſe upon or deceive God. I conceive our reading to be moſt ſutable both to the Text and context. *Such knowledge*, that is, Such knowledge as thou haſt of me, of the leaſt and greateſt things, even of all things that I or any man doth, is too wonderfull for me. For though we may know ſome actions of men, yet we cannot know them all, and we can hardly weigh any of them to the utmoſt. And in this acknowledgment we may take notice of the Pſalmiſt modeſty, who though he had the immediate aſſiſtance of a prophetical Spirit, yet confeſſed, that he was not only not able to know God, but not to know himſelfe, his thoughts, words, and wayes, as God knew them. Such knowledge of my ſelfe as thou O Lord haſt of me, is *too wonderfull for me, I cannot attaine unto it.*

Some perhaps may query upon this, if the Lord knoweth all the wayes of men, and pondereth all their actions, is not this a trouble to God? is not this a diſturbance of his peace, and a diſtraction to him?

I anſwer (as I ſaid before) this is to frame a God like our ſelves, for to him that is omniſcient, it is all one to know all, and to know but one thing: it is no more diſtraction, no more trouble to God to know all that we doe ſpeake, or thinke, then to know any thing. If two or three ſpeake to a man together, he is not able to take in their ſence, the variety of their diſcourſe makes ſuch a hurry and trouble in his ſpirits, that he looſeth all that is ſpoken. But the application of thouſands or of Millions at the ſame time in ſpeaking to the eare of God, is no more trouble, then if but one did ſpeake; an infinite eare heares all, and an infinite eye ſees all, without any the leaſt diſtraction; the infinite knowledge of God takes in all the actions of all men, as eaſily as the ſingle action of any one man.

Again, Others may ſay, Surely the Lord will not take ſuch exact knowledge of all the actions of men, eſpecially of mean men, or ſurely not of the meane actions of meaneſt men; poſſibly of ſome perſons in great place, and of ſome great things done by thoſe perſons he may take notice, but to ſtoope to ſmall

small things, if it be not a trouble, yet it cannot but be a dishonour to, and too great a condescention for the great God.

Non vacat exiguis rebus Deus.

The Heathens said their *Jupiter* had no leasure to deale in small matters; And may not we Christians say, Is it not honorable enough for our God, to have to doe with small matters.

I answer; This also is to frame a God like our selves; as it doth not weary God to behold, to try and ponder all the wayes of all men (which was the fear concerning *Moses* that he should be tired out with the various cases and affaires of that great people; and was therefore advised by *Jethro* to make more Judges, that so the weighter matters onely might be brought before and judged by him) So it is no dishonour at all to God, no, it is his honour that he takes cognisance of the smalleſt matters as well as of the greateſt, of the loweſt as well as of the higheſt concernments of the children of men. (*Psal.* 113. 5, 6.) *Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high? who humbleth himself to behold the things which are in Heaven, and in the Earth.* Who is like to God in this? this is the honour of the high God that he will humble himselfe to behold the loweſt things, the things which are in the Earth, as well as things in Heaven, and the leſſer, the leaſt things in Earth, as well as the greater or the greateſt. *Though the Lord be high yet he humbleth himselfe unto the lowly* (Psal. 138. 6.) and as to *lowly persons*, so to the *loweſt things*. Indeed the Lord doth humble himselfe to behold the things which are in Heaven, it is a Condescention in him to take notice of any Creature; yet he doth not only humble himselfe to behold things in Heaven, but things in the Earth, and in this, who is like unto the Lord our God? this is his glory, and for this he is to be glorified, yea to be cryed up with this admiring Elogium, *Who is like unto the Lord our God?* none among the sons of men are like him in this, yea there is no God like unto the Lord our God in this. We have cause to say (considering our vileneſſe) *What is man that thou shouldst take notice of him?* 'Tis too Great an honour for man, but it is no dishonour to God to take notice of the meaneſt man. The greatneſſe of God appears as in the making, so in the governing and disposing of the smalleſt things. The power of God is seene in making a fly or a worme, as well as in making an Elephant or the vaſt Leviathan; So also is his wiſedome and providence seen in the observing and ordering of those buſineſſes and motions of the creature, which compared to others are but as a flye to an Elephant, or but as a worme to *Leviathan*. There is nothing doth more detract from the greatnes of God, then the denyall or dis-beleeſe of his cognisance of and care about little things. And as it shewes the exacteſt perfection of holineſſe attaynable by man in this life, when he taketh an account of and reprooves himselfe for the leaſt sins, whether they be omiſſions of that good which he is commanded to doe, or commiſſions of that evill which he is forbidden to doe. So it is an undenyable argument of the exactly and absolutely perfect holineſſe, juſtice, goodnes and faithfulneſſe of God, that he taketh an account of, and will certainly reward or puniſh every man for the leaſt good or evill which he hath done. This is the glory of him who walketh in the circuit of heaven, that he sees all to the center of the earth. *Eliphaz* having thus detected and reproved (as he thought) those thoughts and assertions of *Job* which detracted so much from God, as if he did not marke the wayes of men; proceeds to put the queſtion to him, whether himselfe had well marked the wayes of wicked men.

JOB, CHAP. 22. Vers. 15, 16.

Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have troden.
Which were cut downe out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood?

שמר

THe word translated *to marke*, notes a diligent observation; So it is used (*Chap.* 10. 14.) *If I sin then thou markest me*, (that is, thou takest exact or strict notice of me) *and thou wilt not acquitt me from mine iniquity.* (*Psal.* 37. 37.) *marke the perfect man, and behold the upright*, that is, take speciall knowledge of him, *for the end of that man is peace.* (*Psal.* 107. 43.) *who so is wise will observe*, or marke, *these things, he shall understand the loving kindnesse of the Lord.* So here, *Hast thou marked?* hast thou with diligence and seriousnesse of spirit observed, *the old way which wicked men have troden* The Hebrew is, *The way of age, the way of ages*, or as some read, *the Eternall way, the way of Eternity.* *David* prayeth (*Psal.* 139. 23, 24.) *Lead me in the way everlasting*; that is, Lead me in the way of holinesse and righteousnesse, which leads to eternity. Which yet one of the Rabbins expounds, as a periphrasis of death; for death is called, *the way of all the earth* (1 King. 2. 2.) *the way of all flesh* (Josh. 23. 14.) As if *David* had said, Lord, if upon search thou findest that I walke in any way of wickednesse, that is, of willfull sinning, then destroy me, lead me to my grave, yea cast me with the wicked to hell, or to everlasting condemnation. Master *Broughton* thus; *Hast thou marked the way of the old world?*

Observare dei actiones imprimis ipsius judicia magna pars scientiæ est.

Senitam sæculorum vel seculi; æternam aut æternitatis, nam ea omnia denotat vox עלם Rab. *Kimchi.*

But what was this way of the old world, about which *Eliphaz* questions *Job*, whether he had taken notice of it yea or no? The way of the old world may be taken two wayes.

First, For the way of their sinnes.

Secondly, For the way of their punishment.

First, *Hast thou marked the old way* of their sinne? and the old way of their sinne may be considered under a twofold notion.

First,

First, As it was the way of their opinion. Secondly, As it was the way of their practice: Some restraine it here to the way of their opinion, and Interpret *Eliphaz* as chiefly intending that; *Hast thou observed the old way*; that is, the old Erroneous opinions which were in the first ages of the world? In those times there were not a few like thy selfe, who either flatly denyed or belyed the providence of God, who said (as thou doest) *How doth God know?* Surely he hath forsaken the earth, and intermedles not with what is done here below. Thus a learned Interpreter expounds the Text, with reference to their ungodly opinion, *They* (saith he) *who lived in the time of the flood denyed Providence*; Hast thou (O *Job*) marked their opinion and considered it? And that this wicked Error did prevaile in those times, may be Collected from what is reported by *Berosus* of the Giants (of whom we read in the 6th of *Genesis*, vers. 4th, *There were Giants in the earth in those dayes*) Among other of their abominations, this (saith he) was one, or this was a Chiefe one, the roote, or source of them all, they blasphemed God, and contemned Religion, they thought there was no Supream Power, none to whom man was accountable for any of his actions. *Hast thou marked this old way* of Error?

Ad eos opinio hæc referenda est, qui vixerunt tempore diluvij censebantq; tollendam providentiam. Vatabl: *Gigantes religionis contemptores.* Berosus.

In pursuance of which Interpretation, the words which we render, *Hast thou marked*, may be expounded thus; *Hast thou taken up the old way?* art thou a follower of that Sect, of that Tribe who have gone in that wicked way? doest thou also maintain their blasphemy, that God takes no notice of man? This notion holds fair with what he had said before.

Custodiendi verbum prosequi exponitur. Merc.

Secondly, As it may be referred to those abominable, Atheisticall opinions which reigned in those times, so to the wicked Practices, to the old Customes and sinfull Courses which were followed in those times; for where a wicked opinion is lodged in the heart, what kinde of wickednesse is there that they may not breake forth in the life? And so here *the old way* is the way of sinne, the corrupt Course and practices of that debauched generation, especially the way of pride and ambition, which appeared much in the titles given them, *Mighty men, men of name*, or as we render, *Men of renown.* They were men of honour and name with men, but we read not of

any

any honour they did to or received from God. It is the highest disgrace, to be memorable for actings against grace, or for ungracious actings.

Num observas perpetuum, ordinem, quem in Sanctis talibus impijs tenuit deus, post natos homines. Merc.

Putat hunc esse perpetuum ordinem domini ut impios hic puniat, sed fallitur. Merc.

Again, The old way may be taken for the way of punishment, or for that course of divine Justice which was Executed upon wicked men in those elder times. There is a way of Judgement which God takes, as there is a way of Sin which man takes. Sinfull wayes lead into troublesome wayes, and end in death. Hast thou considered the way of Justice which the Lord went in towards those old Sinners? powring out his wrath, and emptying the vialls of his Indignation upon them, till he had consumed and swept them off as rubbish from the face of the earth. *Hast thou marked the old way*, which either the lusts of wicked men have led them into, or which the Justice of the Lord hath brought them into. *Hast thou observed the old way?*

Which wicked men have troden?

The Hebrew is, *Men of Iniquity*; Which phrase plainly imports, that he doth not speak of the ordinary race, or ranke of sinners, but of the Extreamest sinners, men so full of Iniquity, that they deserved this black Title, *men of Iniquity*. Antichrist is called not onely a *man of sin*, or *the man of sin* but (which implyeth a sinner of a higher forme, then both the former) *That man of sin* (2 Thes. 2.3.) He being indeed not onely among the chiefest sinners, but the chiefe of sinners. The phrase in the Text is a degree lower then that, yet it notes a very great degree. And therefore when the Prophet would assure the greatest sinners repenting and returning to God, of the readiness of God to pardon, he expresseth them in this stile (*Isa.* 55. 7) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man*, or (as the Original Text hath it) *the man of iniquity, his thoughts and* &c. As *a man of Bloods* notes a very bloody man, a man given up to that particular sin of cruelty. So *a man of iniquity*, is one given up to sin in Generall. Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men, men of iniquity, have

Trodden.

This word, *trodden*, referred both to a sinfull and a suffering way, notes the frequency of their going or being in those wayes.

wayes. And as it is referred to their sinfull way alone, it notes first their boldnesse in sinning; secondly, their resolvednesse to sin: A trodden way, is such a way as a man hath often gone, and in which he is not afraid to goe. *Hast thou marked the old way.*

Hence note. First,

The way of sin and Error is an old way.

The Devill sinned from the beginning, and men have sinned from their beginning, not onely have there been sinnings, but great sinnings from the beginning; the old way is the way of sin, though the oldest way be not. There was holinesse before there was sinne, and truth before there was Error; So that the way of sin is the old way, but not the oldest way. God, all whose wayes are holy, was from everlasting. The Angels who have been holy as long as they have been, were from the beginning. And the first beginning of man in his conversation, was, no doubt, like his constitution, holy. He quickly went out of the way, but surely his first step was not out of the way, he went right before he went wrong, and stood before he fell. Again, if you take the way for the way of punishment.

Note.

That God in all ages hath punished sinners in their sinfull wayes.

God hath every where and every when left the tract and print of his anger and displeasure upon sinners; though some particular sinners, have gone unpunished in some age, yet there was never any age wherein sinne was not punished in some. The Lord gives a morall stopp to sinne perpetually, that is, by his Lawes he declares against it, his word is expresse against all ungodlinesse, both the word of his Command, and the word of his threatning. Now as the Lord doth alwayes put this morall stopp in the way of sinne, so, he often puts a Judiciary stop, or a stop by way of Judgement. And as in the 3d of *Genesis*, he set a flaming sword in the way of the tree of life, so he continually sets a flaming word, that is, a threatning to keepe the way of the tree of death, that is, of sinne. Thus he alwayes meetes sinfull men in the way of their lusts (as the Angel met *Balaam* when he went to curse the *Israel* of God)

God) with a drawn ſword to ſtopp them in their way; the Lord hath ſet many drawn ſwords in the way of every ſin; and he hath left the prints of his wrath upon the backs of many ſinners, that we ſhould take heed of ſinning. The Lord hath left many ſad examples upon record againſt ſin, nor hath he at any time favoured it, or done any thing which might indeed encourage ſinners; for though ſometimes wicked men have proſper'd, yet, ſhould we looke into all times, we cannot finde that wicked men were ever bleſſed; Judgement hath overtaken them ſooner or later. And if it hath at any time come too late to overtake them in this world, yet it will come ſoone enough to overtake theirs in this, or themſelves in the world which is to come. No man is bleſſed, at any time, who comes at laſt to be miſerable.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith; *Haſt thou marked the old way?*

Note.

It is our duty to obſerve and marke, as the way of ſinfull men, ſo the way in which God puniſheth their ſin.

All the wayes of God are to be marked; as we are to obſerve what the Lord ſpeakes, ſo what he doth; his works as well as his word, are remarkable. *Who ſo is wiſe* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 107. 43.) *and will obſerve theſe things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord.* I may ſay alſo, that they ſhall underſtand the judgements of the Lord. And againe, the Prophet confirmes it (*Hoſ.* 14. 9.) *Who is wiſe, and he ſhall underſtand theſe things prudent; and he ſhall know them for the wayes of the Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them, but the tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therein.* The wicked fall in the way of his commandements, and therefore ſurely they ſhall fall in the way of his judgements. And as the Lord hath given us Examples of this; ſo he hath given this as the uſe of thoſe Examples, that we ſhould marke and obſerve them. The Apoſtle (*1 Cor.* 10) ſhewes that all the dealings of God with that his ancient People the *Jewes*, are written and recorded as our Examples (*ver.* 5, 6, 7.) *With many of them God was not well pleaſed, but they were overthrown in the wilderneſſe. Now theſe things were our Examples, to the Intent that we ſhould not luſt after evill things as they luſted, neither be Idolaters, as ſome of them were, nor fornicators,*

tors, nor tempt Chriſt, nor murmur, &c. He ſhuts up all with the ſame doctrine (*ver.* 11.) *Now all theſe things happened unto them for Enſamples, and are written for our admonition, upon whom the Ends of the Earth are come, therefore let him that ſtandeth take heed leaſt he fall.* The Apoſtle *Peter alſo* (*2 Pet.* 2.) brings in; firſt, the Inſtance of the Angels that fell; ſecondly, of the old world; thirdly, of *Sodome* and *Gomorrah. Whom God condemned with an overthrow, making them an enſample unto thoſe that after ſhould live ungodly.* The Scripture ſpeaks of two ſorts of Enſamples. Firſt, for imitation; ſecondly for caution; the lapſed Angels, the old world, theſe Cities *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, are all left as Enſamples for caution, that all after ages marking the old way of their ſinne and puniſhment, might fear to ſin and ſuffer as they have done.

Fourthly, From the manner of this Expreſſion (*which wicked men have troden*) taking the way conjectively for the way both of ſin and puniſhment, this troddeneſſe of it notes the frequent paſſage which many have made through it. They have not gone it once only but often. Hence obſerve.

As wicked men offend often, ſo the Lord hath puniſhed often, as they have made paths in ſin, ſo God hath made pathes in Judgement.

It is eaſie to follow ſinners (as it were) by the print and tract of thoſe evills which have overtaken them. But I paſſe it here, becauſe *Eliphaz* proceeds more directly to deſcribe the puniſhment of wicked men in the next words.

Verſ. 16 *Which were cut down out of time, and whoſe foundation was overflowne with a flood.*

At this verſe the Original hath a very conſpicuous note of diſtinction. The *Jewes* are very exact in obſerving the letters and the verſes of every booke in the Bible, and between theſe two verſes is the middle of the booke: there being exactly the ſame number of verſes behinde as we have had before in this whole booke of *Job* (taking the 16th verſe Incluſively) So that now we are halfe the booke over according to the number of verſes. The whole containing 1070. The former

חצי הספר

former part hath had 535 and as many remain for the latter part. This I touch onely by the way.

Which were cut downe.

קמט *plicis; redduntur succisi sunt; sed verbum hoc nunquâ occurrit in ea significatione in sacris literis sed tantùm apud doctores hebraorum id fit per metathesin literarum a verbo* קמם *enim tantum occurrit in libro Job, ubi vertitur rugare aut corrugare aut rugas non habere.*

The words carry an alluſion to the felling of trees; as if he had ſaid; Theſe men were like great Oakes and tall Cedars, but the Lord cut them downe. The word is Conceived more properly ſignifying to wrinckle, or to make furrowes in the face; for this word is uſed but once more in all the Bible, and it is in the 16th Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 8. and there we tranſlate, *wrinckles*; *Thou haſt filled me with wrinckles, which is a witneſſe againſt me.* So ſome render it here; *Who were wrinkled out of time.* Now what are wrinckles? they are the markes of old age, and they ſhew that weakneſſe is coming upon us, or that we are in our declining Condition; ſo that it is a very Elegant Expreſſion to ſay, *They were wrinckled out of time*, that is, *they were old afore they were old*, before they were old according to the nature of man, they were made old by the Judgements of God; They lookt as if they were worne, ſpent, and eaten out by time, whereas indeed they were ſpent, eaten and worne out with the wrath and indignation of God which fell upon them. Thus *they were wrinckled out of time*, or *before their time.*

לא עת *ſine tempore, vel non tempus, i. e. ante tequam expleverint anno, ſecundam communem naturæ legem.*

They were cut down, and no time, as ſome render: But it may be ſaid, as *Solomon* did (*Eccl.* 3. 1.) *There is a time for every thing*; how then could they be cut down in no time? There may be a twofold interpretation given of this Hebraiſme.

First this, to ſhew that they dyed a violent not a naturall death, that either God by his immediate Judgements did cut them off, or that he gave them up to the Juſtice of man, who cut them off before their time. Man hath a ſet time, an ordinary time of dying (the dayes of man are threeſcore years and ten, this is the ordinary time of dying) they that dye before, are in Scripture ſence. *Cut down out of time*, or *not in time*, that is, not in that time at which men uſually dye according to the courſe and cuſtome of nature.

Secondly, when 'tis ſaid, *They were cut down without time*, the meaning is, they were cut downe very ſuddenly, as if it were done without any time at all; God was ſo farre from lingring or taking up long time to deſtroy theſe men, that he cut them down (as it were) without any time at all, even in a moment, in an Inſtant, as ſpeedily as a man can thinke it, farre more ſpeedily then any man can do it. He did it without delay. As uſually the grace of God, ſo often the wrath of God makes no demurs.

לא עת *ſine tempore, vel non tempus, i. e. ante tequam expleverint anno, ſecundam communem naturæ legem.*

Obſerve from the manner of Expreſſion, *Cut downe.*

That, *God brings ruining judgements on the ſtouteſt of ſinners.*

He doth not onely pull off ſome of their fruit, and leaves, or lop off their branches, but he cuts them downe, yea he ſtubbs them up by the roots, till there is nothing left, they are cut down *root and branch.* Thus the Lord threatned the houſe of *Jeroboam* (1 *King.* 14. 10.) *Behold I will bring evill upon the houſe of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that piſſeth againſt the wall* (that is, every man of his houſe) *and him that is ſhut up and left in Iſrael* (that is, him that is moſt eſteemed, as things ſhut up are, and him that is leaſt eſteemed, as things left abroad are; or thoſe who are ſecured or have ſecured themſelves in ſtrongeſt holds, as men ſhut up are, as well as thoſe who are left naked and expoſed to the eaſieſt dangers, as men left at large are) *and will take away the remnant of the houſe of Jeroboam* (that is, all who have eſcaped or ſurvived the former troubles) *as a man taketh away dung till it be all gone*; that is, till his houſe be utterly exterminated: for dung being a filthy and noyſome thing, men never leave taking it away, from places where it is an annoyance, till they have taken it all away. *That which is offenſive in the whole nature of it, is offenſive in the leaſt degree of it.*

Again, when 'tis ſaid, *He cuts them down without time, or before their time*, we may obſerve.

Wicked men are often ripe for Judgement, before they are ripe in yeares.

Cum potuiſſent diutius perſiſtere. Tyrus. Capiti jun. Interpretatio Sept.

It is ſaid in the 15th of *Geneſis*, *The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full*, their ſin is not come to a full ſtature; for as there is a fulneſſe of ſtature in holineſſe unto which Saints at laſt arrive in Chriſt, ſo there is a fulneſſe of ſtature in wickedneſſe to which the Lord ſuffers ſinners to arrive; and as when Saints have attained their full ſtature in holineſſe, they are received into

into glory; ſo when wicked men have attained a full ſtature in wickedneſſe, they are cut off and turned down to deſtruction. Though the Lord ſuffer long, yet he will not alwayes ſuffer. And as ſome are but young men, yet old Saints, and have had much Experience of God, and of the wayes of grace, though but little of the world (that diſtinction which the Apoſtle gives of Saints into little children, young men, and fathers (*1 Joh.* 2. 13, 14.) is not to be underſtood in reference to naturall years, but to ſtanding in grace, or to a growth and progreſſe in holineſſe) ſo ſome wicked men, are but of few years, or but young in reference to their naturall age, who yet are old in ſin, aged in wickedneſſe, they are fathers in abomination, while but children in time, and ſo are cut down before time *Wicked men are never cut down till they are ripe in ſin, but they are often cut down before they are ripe in nature.*

Thirdly, *Which were cut down out of time*; namely, in little time, or without delay.

Hence note;
That, *God can quickly make an end of wicked men.*

He needs not take any long time to doe it; he tooke but very little time to make the world, it was made in ſix dayes, which in reference to the greatneſſe of the worke is no time: when a great thing is done in a little time, we may ſay it was done without any time at all. Now if the Lord could frame a world without time, ſurely he can cut downe the world, or the inhabitants of it in a little time? *Ruining work is eaſier then building worke.* He that built (in this ſence) without time, can pull downe without time, we need not trouble our ſelves with ſuch thoughts as theſe, when we ſee wicked men, Enemies of God and his people in their height and ſtrength, O what a length of time will it require? O how many yeares muſt be ſpent in cutting downe theſe ſtrong Oakes, thoſe tall Cedars? the Lord can cut them downe in a moment. Our late experiences have ſhewed us wicked men cut downe without time; before they thought they could be ſhaken, yea toucht, they have been cut downe; when they concluded they could not be reached, they have been ruined. The Jeſuites

Jeſuites and other Matchavillian politicians have a received Maxime of State among them; *Take time and ye may doe any thing.* If you are diſappointed in a project this year, waite a few yeares longer (ſay they) and you ſhall either finde or make a way to accompliſh it. But the Lord can doe any thing he hath a minde to at any time, or without taking time. The Apoſtle prophecying of the Antichriſt ſaith (*2 Theſ.* 2. 6, 7.) *Now ye know what withholdith, that he may be revealed in his time; for the myſtery of iniquity doth already worke, onely he who now letteth will let, till he be taken out of the way.* The power and ſplendour of the Romane Empire ſtood in Antichriſts way, and he could not cut it down without time; He was hacking and hewing, heaving and thruſting many yeares, yea ſome ages before he could remove that block out of his way, and ſo make a way for his own Greatneſſe. The wiſeſt of men muſt have time to bring about their ends. Onely God, the onely wiſe God, can cut down and remove whatſoever ſtands in his way (though it ſtand like a great mountain) without time or without taking time, if once his time be come in which he would have it removed. The wicked of thoſe elder times were cut down ſuddenly, without time. *Eliphaz* confirmes it further in the next words.

Whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.

In this latter clauſe *Eliphaz* ſeemes more clearly to hint at ſome particular wicked men, or to ſhew who thoſe wicked men were that he intends as the object of his obſervation, namely, thoſe, *whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.* It is uſuall in Scripture, by ſome one word to alude to great actions and changes paſt. Take two or three Inſtances for Illuſtration of this (*Pſal.* 55. 15.) *David* Imprecates vengeance upon his enemies in this Language; *Let them goe downe quicke into hell.* Which expreſſion carrieth a plaine alluſion unto that dreadfull judgement. (*Numb* 16. 31, 32.) *It came to paſſe as he* (that is, *Moſes*) *had made an End of ſpeaking all theſe words, the ground clave aſunder that was under them; and the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed them up and their houſes, & all the men which appertained unto Corah, and all their goods. They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit,* &c. This hiſtoricall

Narration the Pſalmiſt hints at in his inprecation, as is plaine by that word *quick* or *alive*; *Let them go down quick* (or alive) *into hell*; that is, let ſuch wrath ſeaze upon them, as ſeazed upon *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, on whom *the earth cloſed and they periſhed from among the Congregation*. Again, when the Apoſtle makes promiſe to Saints in the behalf of Chriſt what aſſiſtance they might expect from him in time of temptation, and what iſſue from it, he thus aſſures them; *The God of peace ſhall tread Satan under your feete ſhortly*, (Rom. 16. 20.) Which plainly beares upon that firſt grand Promiſe, that (*Chriſt*) *the ſeed of the Woman ſhould break the Serpents head* (Gen. 3. 15.) for it is by vertue of that act of Jeſus Chriſt bruiſing the head of Satan, that Satan is trodden under our feet. As Chriſt bruiſed him under his owne feete, ſo he will bruiſe, or tread him under our feete; the ſeede of the woman in perſon, as well as in their repreſentative, ſhall breake the Serpents head. Laſtly, thoſe words (*Rom.* 9. 16.) hold a cleare correſpondence with that Story (*Gen.* 27.) concerning *Jacob* and *Eſau*, *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy*. He had ſaid before that *God loved Jacob and hated Eſau*; and concludes upon it, *So then, it is not of him that willeth*, &c. We may take notice in that famous peice of the divine Hiſtory, that much meanes was uſed that *Jacob* might obtaine the Bleſſing; *Rebecka* her heart was ſet upon it; ſhe did what ſhe could to procure the Bleſſing for her younger Sonne, her will was wholly in it; and *Jacob*, he run for it too; for as ſoone as Ever his mother had given him counſell, he ran preſently to the flock and brought in a Kid to make the ſavoury meat for *Iſaac*; Now the Apoſtle *Paul* to advance the freeneſſe of grace, doth not onely inſtance in thoſe two perſons, but uſeth a phraſe of ſpeech which ſavours ſo much of that paſſage, that though he had not named the men, yet every man who knew the Scriptures muſt needs underſtand both of whom and of what he meant it; *It is not of him that willeth*, &c. that is, it was neither *Rebeckaes* will to have it ſo, nor *Jacobs* haſt (which appeard in his running to the flock) to have it ſo, that gave him the Bleſſing, but it was of God that ſhewed mercy. And as it was then, ſo it is now, though a man be as willing as *Rebeckah*, or though he make as much ſpeed as *Jacob* for his bleſſing, yet

yet all comes freely by the grace of God. Thus the frequent uſage of Scripture ſhews us how much the Spirit of God delights to lead our thoughts (by the light of ſome one word) a great way back into the conſideration of what hath been done and written of old for our inſtruction. The words of the text now under diſcuſſion (*Whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood*) are ſurely an alluſion to ſome particular perſons or action in the dayes of old, and they may be applyed three wayes.

Firſt, To the drowning of the whole world in the time of *Noah* by a flood, when the Lord opened the windowes of heaven, and overwhelmed both man and beaſt in thoſe mighty waters, which univerſall judgement is (by way of eminence) called, *The Deluge*, or, *The Flood*, unto this very day.

Secondly, They may have reſpect to the overthrow of *Sodome* and *Gomorrah*, which Cities, though they were deſtroyed by fire, yet it was with a flood of fire. The Text ſaith expreſly (*Gen.* 19. 24.) *Then the Lord rayned upon Sodome and upon Gomorrah brimſtone and fire from the Lord out of heaven, and he overthrew the Cities and all the plaine*, &c. They were overflowne with a flood of fire.

Thirdly, The alluſion may be carried to the deſtruction of *Pharoah* and the *Ægyptians* in the red Sea; They alſo *were overflowne with a flood*. The waters of the red Sea which ſtood up as a wall for *Iſrael* to paſſe thorow, at the Command of God returning upon the *Ægyptians*, ſwallowed them up, them and their Chariots and their horſes. *The enemy ſaid* (thus *Moſes* deſcribes that fatal overthrow (*Exod.* 15. 9, 10.) *I will purſue, I will overtake, I will divide the ſpoyle: my luſt ſhall be ſatisfied upon them, I will draw my ſword, my hand ſhall deſtroy them*. Thus the enemy raged and foamed with revenge, like a tempeſtuous Sea, and had opened all the ſluces of his will to overflow them. And when the enemy had thus breathed out his wrath in a four times repeated, *I will*; Then the *Lord did blow with his wind, the Sea covered them, They ſanke as lead in the mighty waters*. So then the words may relate to any of thoſe three ſignall Judgements, to the drowning of the old world with a flood of water, to the deſtruction of *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* with a flood of fire, or to the overthrow of *Pharoah* and his *Ægyptian* hoſt in the red Sea.

Hanc locum a v. 15. ad v. 20. omnino reſpicere ad dimerſionem Pharaonis & Ægyptiorum non levibus ſuadeor conjecturis. Pined.

But more particularly, for the explication of theſe words, *whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.*

Whoſe foundation.

This word *foundation* taken in a proper ſence, referres to a materiall building And the foundation of any building is the ſtability and ſtrength of it; by *foundation*, in a metaphoricall ſence, we are to underſtand all thoſe things by which the ſtate of perſons or things is upheld; and here whatſoever wicked men ſupport and beare up themſelves by, as a building is born up by the foundation, is to be underſtood as their foundation. So their power, their riches, their councell, their wiſdome, their friends and confederates; whatſoever, I ſay, is the ſupport of their worldly State, that's their foundation. And thus it is here ſaid, *their foundation was overflown.*

Ferè omnia quæ inſtituit ſibi fundamenti loco ponebant, &c. Merc.

With a flood.

In two of the former Inſtances, to which the alluſion was made, their foundation was overflowne by a flood properly taken. If we take it more generally for all wicked men, who at any time have been overthrown, we may ſay, that they have all been overflown by a flood metaphorically. For ſo

Firſt, The diſpleaſure of God, by what meanes or inſtrument ſoever put forth is called a flood; whether it be by ſword, or by famine, or by peſtilence, it is a flood. (*Eſa.* 8. 7.) We read waire Compared to a flood; *Now therefore behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, ſtrong and many* (what were theſe waters?) *Even the King of Aſſyria, and all his glory*, the King of *Aſſyria* with his Armyes, in which he gloried, or which he counted his glory, were the waters of the river, ſtrong and many) *and he ſhall come up over all his channells, and goe up over all his bands* (that is, the former Limits of his Dominion) *And he ſhall paſſe thorow Judah, he ſhall overflow and goe over.* There the Sword is Compared to a flood, or to a mighty river, which beares downe all before it. The ſame Prophet ſpeakes again in the ſame Language (*Eſa.* 59. 19.) *When the enemy ſhall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord ſhall lift up a Standard againſt him*; as if it had been ſaid, *The enemy ſhall come rushing in like a mighty torrent, but the Spirit of God, like a more mighty*

mighty winde, ſhall blow and ruſh upon him, cauſing him to recoile and give back or (as our Margent hath it) *put him to flight*. Again (*Ezek.* 13.) The Prophet foreſhewes the approaching calamity upon thoſe who had ſeduced the *Jewes* into a vaine ſecurity; which is there called, *the building of a Wall with untempered morter*. A wall he calls that prophecy, becauſe it promiſed ſafety, and defence; but he calls it alſo a wall built with untempered morter, becauſe that falſe prophecy was a weake prophecy, and ſhould ſhortly fall. The manner how, he gives us in the notion of the Text (*verſ.* 13.) *Wherefore thus ſaith the Lord God, I will even rent it with a ſtorm y winde in my fury, and there ſhall be an overflowing ſhower in mine anger*, &c. that is, wrath ſhall be upon it (the Babylonian Army was the ſpeciall judgement in which that wrath was expreſſed) and that *ſhall be as an overflowing ſhower*. Great and continuall ſhowers will try the ſtrongeſt buildings, and quickly overthrow the weake. A wall of untempered morter is no match for a ſtorme. As our Saviour alſo aſſures us in the cloſe of his Sermon on the Mount, (*Matth.* 7. 27.) where all thoſe evills, troubles, afflictions, ſorrowes, and perſecutions, whether ſent upon ſuch as are really godly, or onely in name and outward profeſſion, are called *rain, floods, winds*. So ſaith the Text, *The raine deſcended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon the houſe and it fell, and great was the fall of it*. While it ſtood, it ſtood to no purpoſe but for a ſhew, but when it fell, it fell to purpoſe, *The fall thereof was great*. Thus it is more then evident from Scripture phraſe, that raines and floods ſignifie all ſorts of afflicting evils, and therefore we need not reſtraine the word *flood* in the Text to a Deluge of Elementary water, or of water in a proper ſence, but we may Enlarge it to any kinde of afflicting Evill or trouble whatſoever that falls upon man. And the Scripture is (I conceive) ſo frequent in the uſe of this metaphor of a flood, and of waters, where great calamities are ſet forth, for theſe two reaſons.

Firſt, To note the ſwiftneſs and ſuddenneſs of the judgements of God. Floods come often very ſuddenly, and riſe not onely beyond expectation, but before there is any the leaſt expectation of them. *Noahs* flood was long foretold before it came, but when the time came, wherein it ſhould come, it came at

at once. Though God give long warning of his judgements, yet moſt men are ſurprized with them, they come like a flood.

Secondly, To note the Irreſiſtableneſſe of the Judgements of God; who or what can ſtand before mighty waters? Great floods doe not onely waſh and overflow all, but ruine and overthrow all, there's no reſiſting. Such are the Judgements of God, they are a flood both for their ſuddain riſing and breaking in upon ſinners, and likewiſe for their Irreſiſtible violence in breaking and ruining them.

Further, It is not to be paſſed by, That *Eliphaz* doth not onely ſay, They were *overflowne*, but, *Their foundation was overflowne with a flood.* He calls it the overflowing of their foundation, to note, that they were totally or utterly ruined and overthrowne: for when the foundation is deſtroyed, all is deſtroyed; deſtruction to the foundation is the worſt of deſtructions. The cruel enemies of the *Jewes* cryed, *Raſe it, raſe it even to the foundation thereof* (Pſ. 137. 7.) but to raſe the foundation it ſelfe is more cruell then raiſing to the foundation. When the Lord threatned a full and finall deſtruction of thoſe fooliſh Prophets who had ſeen vain viſions for his people, he ſaid (*Ezek.* 13. 14.) *I will brake down the wall that ye have dawbed with untempered morter, and bring it down to the ground, ſo that the foundation thereof ſhall be diſcovered*, &c. That is, I will deſtroy it as farre as deſtruction it ſelfe can go. There ſhall not only not a ſtone be left upon a ſtone of this building above ground, but even the under-ground ſtones ſhall not be left. The very foundation ſhall be opened and diſcovered. That which lyeth at the bottome, or the bottome it ſelfe of thoſe flattering prophecies, all the wiles & ſecret ways of them ſhall be revealed. *David* complaines of thoſe irreparable breaches made upon the civill ſtate in this ſtile (*Pſal.* 11. 3.) *If the foundations be deſtroyed, what can the righteous doe?* The civill foundation of a Nation or people, is their Lawes, and Conſtitutions, the order and power that is among them, that's the foundation of a People, and when once this foundation is deſtroyed, *what can the righteous doe?* what can the beſt, the wiſeſt in the world doe in ſuch a caſe? what can any man doe, if there be not a foundation of Government left among men? There is no helpe nor anſwer in ſuch a caſe, but that which followes in the 4th verſe of the ſame Pſalme; *The*

The Lord is in his holy Temple, the Lords throne is in heaven, his eyes behold, his eye lids try the children of men. As if he had ſaid; in the midſt of theſe confuſions, when as it is ſaid (*Pſal.* 82. 5.) *All the foundations of the earth are out of courſe*; yet God keepes his courſe ſtill, he is where he was and as he was, without variableneſſe or ſhadow of turning. We read in the viſion of the four Monarcheys (*Dan.* 2. 34.) That *The ſtone Cut out without hands ſmote the Image upon his feet that were of Iron and Clay, and brake them to peeces.* The ſtone did not ſtrike the Image upon the head, or upon the breaſt, the golden head, the ſilver breaſt, &c. but upon the feete that were of Iron and Clay. Now the feete are to a naturall body, as the foundation is to an Artificial body; A mans feete are the foundation of his body; if the feete be ſmitten and broken to pieces, the body muſt needs fall. And therefore as ſoone as ever it was ſaid, That the Stone *brake the feete to pieces*, The ruine of the whole Image is deſcribed in the immediately following words of the viſion (*ver.* 35.) *Then was the Iron, the Clay, the braſſe, the ſilver, and the gold broken to peices together, and became like the chaffe of the Summer threſhing floore, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.* The breaking of the feete, was the breaking up of the foundation, and ſo the *breaking down of all. Whoſe foundation was overflowne with a flood.*

Hence note;

First, *Wicked men thinke themſelves very ſure, they have foundations, they lay foundations.*

The people of God are ſometimes over-conceited about the ſtrength and ſtability of their worldly foundations. Holy *David* ſaid, *In his proſperity, I ſhall never be moved, Lord by thy favour thou haſt made my mountaine to ſtand ſtrong*, (Pſal. 30. 6, 7.) And if a godly man may, by the ſtrength of temptation, thus overreckon the ſtrength of an Earthly ſtate, what may they doe whoſe ſtate, yea whoſe minds are altogether earthly? How often doe they judge themſelves wiſe and politique enough to lay for themſelves an everlaſting foundation in things which cannot laſt? and that they are ſo ſurely bottom'd in the favour of men, that they *ſhall never be removed. Babylon* thinks her ſelfe ſetled at this day upon ſuch everlaſting mountaines, upon

upon ſuch perpetuall hills of power and policy, that certainly her foundation ſhall never be overflowne. Thus ſhe ſpake her heart out, while *ſhe ſaid in her heart* (Rev. 18. 7.) *I ſit a Queene, and am no widdow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* Babylon is bottom'd and foundation'd upon ſo many hills, that is, upon ſo many Intereſts and advantages of ſtrength, as render her (to her ſelfe) impregnable and unremoveable. And as this vaine confidence beares up the Spirit of that Man of ſin, ſo of very many ſinfull men, who preſume they are upon a ſure foundation, when indeed none but the godly mans foundation is ſure. (*Pro.* 10. 25.) *As the whirlewind paſſeth, ſo is the wicked no more, but the righteous is an everlaſting foundation.* The wicked man ſuppoſeth himſelfe founded as on a Rock of ages an everlaſting ſtrength, ſuch as the righteous man hath in God, or ſuch as God is to a righteous man (*Eſay* 26. 3) *Yet as the whirlewind he paſſeth away, but the righteous is an everlaſting foundation.* We find not the Copulative word, *is*, expreſſed in the Hebrew, there 'tis only, *but the righteous an Everlaſting foundation*; So that I ſhould rather read it thus; *But the righteous have an everlaſting foundation*: wicked men ſeeme to have, but the righteous man indeed *hath an Everlaſting foundation.* There is no earthly foundation everlaſting; For all earthly things paſſe away, and are ſo farre from laſting for ever, that they laſt but (as it were) for a little, for a moment. What then is this everlaſting foundation? It is a foundation laid in heavenly things; The foundation which is laid in things above ſhall abide; The things which are not ſeen, and they onely, are eternall (2 *Cor.* 4. 18.) but the ſtrongeſt foundation laid in things below, endures but for a *ſeaſon*, *The things which are ſeen, are temporall*, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes in the ſame place. Such foundations are ſoon overflown with a flood. As will appear yet further in the next obſervation; Which take thus;

The flood and ſtorm of Gods anger will overflow all the foundations, the ſtrongeſt foundations of wicked men.

Their riches, their power, their wiſedome, their Councels, whatſoever they have imagined, laid and made for a foundation to themſelves, either of honour or ſafety, ſhall be overflown and ſwept quite away; yea all their refuges laid together

ther will prove *but a refuge of lyes*, (*Iſa.* 28. 17.) *Judgement alſo will I* (ſaith the Lord) *lay to the line, and righteouſneſſe to the plummet, and the hayle ſhall ſweepe away the refuge of lyes, and the waters ſhall overflow the hiding place.* That is, thoſe places wherein they thought to hide and ſecure themſelves againſt the overflowing ſcourge. A wicked man is in greateſt danger when he thinkes himſelfe in greateſt ſafety, and then moſt ready to fall when he ſaith in his owne heart, or boaſteth it out to others, that he is upon a ſure foundation; For whatſoever opinion he hath of it; yet the truth is, his foundation is but ſand; and (which makes his caſe more miſerable) though he be told ſo, and others have found it ſo, yet he will not beleeve it. While (as the Prophet ſpeakes, *Iſa.* 44. 20.) *He feedeth of aſhes, a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay is there not a lye*, or (as the former Scripture hath it) *a refuge of lyes in my right hand.* Only *the righteous is, or hath* (as *Solomon* ſpeakes) *an everlaſting foundation.* A righteous man hath two foundations which ſhall never be ſhaken, much leſſe overthrown; who ſo are ſetled on thoſe foundations may be as confident as confidence it ſelfe.

The firſt of theſe two foundations is Gods Eternall Decree, his Decree of Election, that's an unmoveable foundation, and that is the foundation upon which beleevers build their hopes. The Apoſtle (2 *Tim.* 2. 19, 20.) is proving that even in the houſe of God, that is, among the outward profeſſors of the name of God, there are of all ſorts, veſſells of gold and ſilver, veſſells alſo of wood and of Earth; *Some to honour, and ſome to diſhonour*; and when he had ſaid of *Himenius and Philetus, that they had erred concerning the truth, ſaying that the reſurrection is paſt already, and ſo had overthrowne the faith of ſome*, verſ. 18. He preſently adds, What though it be thus, what though ſome men have fallen from their foundation, *yet the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this Seale, The Lord knoweth who are his*, verſe 19. Where we have firſt the foundation of God, namely, his decree of Election; Secondly, the Seale or aſſurance of it, as to him, even his own certain knowledge of the Elect, *The Lord knoweth who are his.* So that while hypocrites or meere verbal formal profeſſors back ſlide and Apoſtatize from the faith, yet the Elect are ſafe and ſtand faſt in the purpoſe of

God; and while many diſcover themſelves to be veſſels of diſhonour in the houſe of God, wood and Earth, of baſe and brittle materials; yet Saints, indeed, who are veſſels of honour made of pureſt metal, of Gold and Silver, theſe ſhall abide for ever. He that is once a veſſel of honour, ſhall alwayes be ſo, *For the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this Seale, The Lord knoweth who are his.*

Secondly, As there is this more hidden foundation, upon which Saints are ſure, and which no flood can overflow; ſo there is another ſure foundation, and that is *Jeſus Chriſt*, upon which Saints are built, and therefore the holy Prophet having diſcovered that refuge of lyes which he threatens ſhould be swept away by the overflowing ſcourge, ſubjoynes by way of Oppoſition in the next verſe (*Iſa.* 28. 16.) *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation a ſtone, a tryed ſtone, a precious corner ſtone, a ſure foundation, and he that beleeveth ſhall not make haſt.* Whom the Prophet means by this ſure foundation, the Apoſtle tells us expreſſely and by name (1 *Cor.* 3. 11.) *Other foundation can no man lay then that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*; and they that are built on him the living Rocke (as all Beleevers are) have eternall life, and ſhall never periſh. This Chriſt himſelfe teacheth us (*Matth.* 7. 24, 25.) *Whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings (of mine and doth them, I will liken him to a wiſe man that built his houſe upon a Rock.* And what's the Rock that theſe wiſe men build upon? This rock is Jeſus Chriſt, he is the rock of Ages; He fayles not, nor can they fall who are in him; as it followeth; *Then the raine deſcended, the floods came, the winds blew and beat upon the houſe, & it fell not, for it was founded on a rock.* Saints are *lively ſtones*, and they *coming to Chriſt* (by faith) *who is a living ſtone, diſallowed indeed of men, but choſen of God and precious, are built up a ſpirituall houſe* (1 Pet. 2. 4, 5.) If this houſe ſhould fall, Chriſt muſt fall too, for though Chriſt and this houſe are diſtinguiſhed, yet they are not divided; Chriſt and this houſe are one; So then though the floods of angry men, and of enraged Devils beate upon it, yet they ſhall rereturn foaming out their own ſhame, and when they have done their worſt, they ſhall but waſh this houſe, leaving it ſomewhat more cleane, but no whit unſetled. This is the glory and priviledge of Beleevers, that while the ſtrongeſt foundations

ons of the earth are overflowne with a flood, They have a twofold foundation. That of Election in the Love of God, and that of Redemption in the bloud of Chriſt, which cannot be overflowne by any the moſt violent and impetuous flood.

So then, ungodly men are miſerable, when they appeare moſt happy, and at their beſt eſtate are altogether vanity; for either their eſtate hath no foundation, or but ſuch a foundation as cannot ſtand, and that is as bad or rather worſe then none at all; It is better to have no appearance of ſtrength, then to have nothing but an appearance of it.

Further, may we not from the oppoſite ſtate of Godly men (at leaſt intimated in this, and toucht before) conclude, that they are happy when they appear moſt miſerable? and that at their worſt eſtate, they are altogether above uncertainty? For as they have a foundation, ſo ſuch a foundation as will ſtand all ſtormes and weathers; What can be added to their felicity, who are in an eſtate ſo good (in the nature of it) that they need not deſire a change, and ſo ſure in the foundation of it) that they need not fear a change, much leſſe an overflowing flood?

Eliphaz proceeds to deſcribe the particular wickedneſſe of thoſe men, or how they did Expreſſe their wickedneſſe; *Whoſe foundation was thus overflowne; They ſay unto God depart from us*, &c.

JOB, CHAP. 22. Verſ. 17, 18.

Which ſaid unto God, Depart from us, and what can the Almighty doe for them?
Yet he filled their houſes with good things: but the counſell of the wicked is farre from me.

IN the former context *Eliphaz* had charged *Job* with impiety againſt God, and called him to conſider the diſpenſations of God in former times towards impious men, here he ſhewes us what their impiety was, It was impiety hightned into blaſphemy, The ſeven abominations which were in their hearts, brake out at their lips, and were vomited out of their mouths in black coler, in coler as black as blacke as hell.

Verſ. 17. *Which ſaid unto God depart from us*, &c.

Theſe words are filled with the very ſpirit of malice againſt God himſelfe; And we have the ſame breathed out in the ſame language in the former Chapter at the 14th verſe, there the reader may finde them explicated, and I ſhall add ſomewhat for a further explication here.

Which ſaid to God, depart from us.

To this height of madneſſe do ſome wicked men ariſe, their ſpirits being bigge with ſinne, they bring forth or belch out this monſter of words; *They ſay to God, depart from us.* They (as it were) ſend God a writ of Ejectment, they doe not pray or entreate God to depart from them, but with as much rudeneſſe and incivility, as unholineſſe and prophaneneſſe, *Say unto God depart from us.* 'Tis a word of command, from man, but ſuch a one as breakes all the commandements of God. *Moſes* (*Numb.* 16. 26.) beſeeches the people, ſaying, *Depart I pray you from the tents of theſe wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs*; but here we have wicked men not praying God to depart, but bidding him, *they ſay depart from us. David* ſpeakes to the wicked (*Pſal.* 119. 115.) *Depart from me ye evill doers, for I will keep the commandements of my God*; he bids them begone, He would not

not give them the leaſt welcome or entertainment. And ſo Jeſus Chriſt is deſcribed ſpeaking to the wicked in the day of Judgement (*Matth.* 7. 23.) *Depart from me*, away, get you out of my preſence, I will not have to doe with you, I will doe nothing for you; *Depart.* His is a word of command, indeed, which though they have no will to obey, yet they ſhall obey it whether they will or no. Thus in the preſent text wicked men preſume to ſay to God himſelfe, *depart from us*, &c.

Hence note.

First, *That wicked or meere carnall men, have ſome appearances and impreſſes of the preſence of God upon their ſpirits.*

They could not ſay to God, *depart from us*, had they not ſome impreſſions and notions of God, of the will and Law of God, of the truth and power of God upon them. They who are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, doe yet feele a preſence of God with them (*Act.* 17. 27.) *That they ſhould ſeeke the Lord, if haply they might feele after him and finde him, though he be not farre from every one of us.* Take mankinde in generall, good and bad, beleevers and infidels, there is a neerneſſe of God unto them, unto them all: and that not onely a neerneſſe of God in what the Apoſtle there ſpeakes of, common preſervation (*ver.* 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, or of naturall communications, of which the Apoſtle ſpeakes there alſo, *From him we receive life, and breath, and all things* (*ver.* 25.) But further God is with them, by a twofold light; firſt, by a light of Direction; ſecondly, by a light of Conviction. All have a Light of Direction, 1. by the Law written in their hearts. The Apoſtle is expreſſe for this (*Rom.* 2. 14.) *For when the Gentiles* (he meanes it of Gentiles unconverted) *which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, theſe having not the Law* (that is formally publiſhed and preached to them) *are a law unto themſelves. Which ſhew the worke of the Law written in their hearts, their conſcience alſo bearing witneſſe*, &c. And as all have a light of direction from the Law written in their hearts, or in the booke of Conſcience; ſo alſo 2. they have a light of direction from the Law of the creation, or from that which is written of God in the

the Booke of the creature. The ſame Apoſtle makes this the ground of the righteouſneſſe of God in that dreadfull *Revelation of his wrath againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men* (be they who they will) *who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſſe, becauſe that which may be known of God is manifeſt in them* (or to them) *for God hath ſhewed it to them.* But how or where hath God ſhewed them this? The Apoſtle anſwers in the next verſe (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeene, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and Godhead, ſo that they are without excuſe.* So that though all men have not a light of direction from God ſo powerfull as to change them and make them holy, yet they have a light ſo cleare and full as is enough to make them guilty. And when they refuſe to follow this light of direction in doing what is right, then followes that other light of conviction, their conſciences troubling them, (or as the Apoſtles phraſe is, *Rom.* 2. 15.) their thoughts accuſing them, becauſe they have done that which is not right. This preſence of God is common to all men, to the worſt of men, and this is it which provokes them to *ſay to God, depart from us.* And this is argument enough to ſtop the mouth of the Atheiſt, who ſaith in his heart, *there is no God*; when as yet he cannot ſtop the mouth of his own conſcience from ſaying *there is a God*, while he ſaith (and this he alwayes ſaith, either in plaine termes, or in that which is equivalent) *to God depart from me.* And from hence we may obſerve;

Secondly;

That the preſence, and manifeſtations of God to wicked men, are a trouble to them.

None are troubled with the neereneſs of God to them, but they who are farre from him. all naturall men are farre from God in ſtate and in heart, and God is neere all naturall men, either in his word or in his works, either ſpeaking his minde to their eares, or ſending it in to their conſciences. This light of God is not onely not pleaſing but vexing. They who love darkneſſe cannot abide the light of direction, much leſſe the light of conviction; So that if ever God be *neer in their mouth*, neer in their eare, or neere in their conſcience, yet as the Prophet

phet ſpeakes (*Jer.* 12. 2.) *He is farre from their reines*; that is, though they ſpeake, heare or thinke of God, yet they delight not in him, they have no deſirings, no breathings after him, yea the more he offers himſelfe to them, the more weary are they of him. What *David* ſpake in a temptation, they ſpeake from their diſpoſition (*Pſal.* 73. 3.) *I remembred God and was troubled.* It troubles them when they are put in minde of God, it troubles them when God comes into their minde. God is holy, and they are unholy, The holy God muſt needs be a burden to an unholy heart. The Prophet puts the Queſtion (*Amos.* 3. 3.) *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* they cannot. That company is alwayes unpleaſant to us, which is unſuitable to us; They who are not at one, are beſt pleaſed when they are furtheſt aſunder. *The wayes of God are grievous to wicked men, much more is God himſelfe*; They ſay what a weariſomneſſe is it to ſerve the Lord, they ſay his yoake is heavy, and his burden inſupportable, the very outſide of heavenly and ſpirituall worke is burdenſome to them, how then can they maintaine communion with God (in truth of ſpirit) *Who is a Spirit and will be worſhipped in Spirit and in truth.*

Thirdly, Note;

Naturall men are blind and fooliſh, they know not wherein their owne happineſſe doth conſiſt, they forſake and throw away the mercies offered them, for lying vanities.

They who are not taught of God are full of miſtaken and falſe principles, among which this is a principall one; *They ſuppoſe they can doe well enough without God, whereas indeed there is nothing can doe us good without him, who is the chiefe good.* Now, that the naturall man beleeves he can doe well enough without God, is plaine from this abominable and hatefull motion which ſuch make to God in the Text, *Depart from us.* No man would deſire God to depart from him, if this perſwaſion did abide upon his heart, *That he could not ſubſiſt without him; or that he depended upon God for his ſubſiſtence.* Therefore this is their opinion (though poſſibly they are as farre from acknowledging it, as they are from the true knowledge and love of God) *That they can do well enough alone, that they can ſtand upon their own bottome without God, yea that they are ſelfe-ſufficient, as God is;* for who-

whoſoever doth not ſee an emptineſſe and inſufficiency in himſelfe, and ſo place his all in God, makes himſelfe a God. This is the way of wicked men, and this their way is *their folly*, (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeakes, *Pſal.* 49. 13.) *Though their poſterity approve their ſayings.* Who but they? they can maintaine their being, yea their well-being without God; they can live and live happily whether he will or no. Surely if they thought they were beholding to him, either for being or well-being, either for life, or a happy life, they had never been heard *ſaying to God depart from us.* And if this be a truth that they have laid ſo, and ſay ſo ſtill every day, we need not ſtay to prove this a truth, that they ſhew their blindneſſe and fooliſhneſſe in ſaying ſo. Is not he fooliſh who would have the Sunne depart from him, which enlightens him? or who would have the Shield depart from him, which protects him? or who bids the fountaine begone which gives him drinke; God is all this to all men in ſome degree or other, and he promiſeth himſelfe ſuch in the higheſt and beſt degree to all ſuch as walke uprightly, even to be their Sunne, their Shield, their fountaine, their ſpring. Then, can folly it ſelfe utter more fooliſhneſs then this, *To ſay to God, depart from us?* Further, how fooliſh are they to refuſe that, as if it were a hurt to them, which Saints who have the true wiſdome, have prayed for; and ſtill doe pray for, as the greateſt bleſſing and priviledge, The preſence of God with them. How fooliſh are they who aske and deſire that as a bleſſing, which God the onely wiſe God threatens as the ſoareſt curſe. (*Jer.* 6. 8.) *Be inſtructed O Jeruſalem, leſt my ſoule depart from thee, leſt I make thee a Land deſolate, not inhabited:* Utter deſolation is the conſequent, yea the effect of the Lords departure from a Land; and when he ceaſeth in regard of his favourable preſence to inhabit a Land, either none ſhall inhabit it, or none ſhall have a comfortable habitation in it. The Lord threatens this departure as the laſt and ſoareſt, or as the ſumme of all his judgements, and wicked men deſire this, as if to be without God were the chiefe or ſumme of their enjoyments. See another inſtance of this folly; among all the threatnings of God againſt ſinfull men, this is one of the greateſt, that he will take away his Goſpel, and the light of his Word from them, yet this a wicked

wicked man deſireth, let the Goſpel goe, let the light of the word goe, He wiſheth it gone, 'tis but a trouble to him, he is ſicke of it, it is a death to him. The beſt of good things is refuſed, and the worſt of evills choſen by thoſe that are evill. As their underſtanding is ſo blinded and diſtempered, *that they call evill good, and good evill, that they put darkneſſe for light, and light for darkneſſe, that they put bitter for ſweete, and ſweete for bitter* (*Iſa.* 5. 20.) So their will and affections are ſo perverted, that they chooſe & embrace darkneſſe for light, evill for good, and that which is moſt bitter, for that which is ſweeter then the honey and the honey combe.

Obſerve. Fourthly.

Wicked men are not onely fooliſh, but wild and furious.

See at what a rate they ſpeake, even as if they had God at their command, *They ſay to God depart*; As if God could not be where he pleaſed, as if God were at their limitting, and diſpoſing. Here's madneſſe, like madneſſe it ſelfe. As there is madneſſe in the heart of man in the enjoyment of the creature (*I ſaid of laughter it is madneſs* (ſaith *Solomon*) Some are ſo over-acted with joy, & laughter in their creature-enjoyments, that whereas laughter is the proper paſſion of a rationall creature, there is nothing more irrationall then their laughter, 'Tis plaine down-right madneſſe, Now (I ſay) as ſome carnall men are mad in their manner of enjoying the creature) ſo they are more mad, in refuſing the enjoyments of God the Creator. Who can tell how mad they are who deſire God to depart from them? *They are mad to purpoſe who would put God from them, yet they more who think they can.*

Fiftly; Note.

That the godly and the wicked have quite contrary both deſires and fears.

What are the deſires and fears of a wicked man, he deſires to have God depart, he is afraid of the preſence of God: what are the deſires of a godly man, he deſires nothing more then the preſence of God, he ſayes as *Moſes* (*Exod.* 33. 15.) *If thy preſence goe not with me, carry me no further*, I deſire to be no where, but where God manifeſts himſelfe to be; let me ſee the

day of my departure out of the world, rather then the day of Gods departure from me in the world; Let riches goe, let liberty goe, let friends and relations goe, ſo God ſtay with me. All company is ſolitarineſſe to me, all fulneſſe is emptineſſe to me, and the moſt populous City worſe then a deſolate wilderneſſe to me, where I finde not the preſence of God with me. I fear nothing like this. The departure of God from me. I read indeed (*Luke* 5. 8) that *Peter* once ſaid to Chriſt, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinfull man, O Lord.* But the reaſon was not becauſe he was weary of the preſence of Chriſt, but becauſe he thought himſelfe altogether unworthy of the preſence of Chriſt. And therefore at another time *when many of Chriſts Diſciples went back and walked no more with him*, and hereupon *Chriſt ſaid to the twelve Will ye alſo go away? Then Simon Peter anſwered him, Lord to whom ſhall we goe, thou haſt the words of Eternal Life* (Joh 6 68.) He who would not go from Chriſt, could not indeed deſire that Chriſt ſhould goe or depart from him. They who have taſted how gracious the Lord is, can never totally depart from God, nor can they at all beare it, that God ſhould depart from them. Thus the Church complaines (*Jer.* 14. 9) *Why ſhouldeſt thou be as a ſtranger in the Land, and as a wayfaying man that turneth aſide to tarry for a night. Why ſhouldeſt thou be as a man aſtoniſhed, as a mighty man that cannot ſave, yet thou O Lord, art in the midſt of us, and we are called by thy name, leave us not*; Whatſoever thou doeſt to us, doe not leave us, let any evill come, but do not thou goe: let ſword come, let famine come, let plague come, but doe not thou depart; *leave us not.* Thus the Saints cling about a departing God, while wicked men are willing he ſhould depart. And conſidering the opinion which theſe wicked men had of God, 'tis no wonder though they preſſe him to depart; for what ſhould God do with them, if he can doe nothing for them, or doe them no good: Such was their apprehenſion of God, as appeares in the next clauſe.

And what can the Almighty doe for them?

They ſhould rather have ſaid; *What cannot the Almighty do for them?* If the queſtion be put, what the Almighty can doe? The anſwer is at hand, he that is Allmighty, can do any thing; yet

yet theſe wretches ſay, *What can the Almighty doe for them?* Almightineſſe it ſelfe is queſtioned as weakneſſe, and omnipotency as impotency by unbeleevers. *Et quid operabitur omnipotens eu.* Heb.

From the generall ſenſe of this infidel queſtion.

Obſerve.

First, *That worldly wicked men have low, and ſlight thoughts of God.*

It is ſaid of a wicked man (*Pſal.* 10. 4.) *God is not in all his thoughts*; that is, he is in none of his thoughts, or God is not at all in his thoughts. But is any man ſo void of God, that God is not in all his Thoughts? can any man utterly extinguiſh or blot the thoughts of God out of his heart? is not the notion of a God, written with indelible Characters upon the heart of man by nature? if not, how is the Law written there by nature? I anſwer, wicked men have thoughts, and cannot but have thoughts of God. But, firſt, *They like not to retain God in their thoughts*, or (which is the ſame) *in their knowledge* (*Rom.* 1. 28.) Secondly, The thoughts which they have of God, are unworthy of God; while they thinke of God, they think below God, and ſo indeed their thoughts are not at all the thoughts of God. While we thinke of God otherwiſe then he is, and hath revealed himſelfe to be, we doe not thinke of the God that made us, but we make an Idol-God in our owne thoughts. Now wicked men thinke either that God hath no ſtrength, power, goodneſſe and wiſdome, or can do little with what he hath; *What can the Almighty doe for them?* They who are afarre off from God by unbeliefe, are not able to diſcerne his power, his goodneſſe, his wiſedome, his faithfulneſſe, his Allſufficiency: They neither underſtand what God affirmes of himſelfe, nor give credit to what he hath promiſed unto us. We ſay of thoſe things, *which appeare more then they are, that they affect more afarre off then neere at hand; but thoſe things which are more then they appeare, affect more when they are nigh, then when they are afarre off.* God is infinitely more, then he appears; And he being neere to thoſe who beleeve, affects them wonderfully. But God is farre from unbeleevers, and they are farre off or in a ſtate of fartheſt diſtance from God, therefore they are not affected with him; But ſay, who is God? what is Gods power?

what is his Almightineſſe? We have heard much of him, but we ſee little in him. They look upon God, as if he were like the Idolls (deſcribed *Pſal.* 115. 4, 5, 6, 7.) *Who have eyes, and ſee not, eares, and heare not, hands, and handle not,* &c. All the attributes of God, that he is almighty, unchangeable, &c. are but a ſound of words or empty titles in their ears. A beleever can make a living out of any attribute of God; for when the Scripture ſaith he lives by faith, the meaning is, he lives upon the goodnes, mercy and power of God, revealed in the promiſe, and laid hold on by faith. Thus the juſt live by faith upon God, but the wicked and unbeleevers cannot live upon thoſe termes; They ſee little or nothing in God to make a Living of, and therefore they ſay; *What can the Almighty doe for them?*

Secondly, Note;
That carnall men count the ſervice of God unprofitable.

What can God do for them? if they ſerve him what profit is it? His is a leane ſervice, they ſhall but ſtarve themſelves by attending upon him, and undoe themſelves by doing his worke. Thus they ſaid in the former Chapter, and ſo they ſay againe in this. The carnall man accounts nothing good, but that which is outwardly good: *Who will ſhew us any good?* (Pſal. 4. 6.) they know not that all good cometh through the hand of God, that it cometh in at the door of the promiſe; They can look no further then they ſee, and therefore becauſe they ſee no profit, they look for none; They doe not ſee that God doth any thing for them, and therefore they conclude he cannot: *What can the Almighty doe for them?*

Thirdly, Note:
That, *The ſpirits of worldly men are meerly mercenary:*

If they doe any thing for God, or at the command of God, they doe it only upon hopes of reward, they never obey commandements for the holineſſe that is in them, but for the benefit that comes by them. *What can the Almighty doe for them?* As when *Judas* betrayed Jeſus Chriſt, he went out with a mercinary ſpirit to doe that wickednesſe; *What will you give me, and I will betray him?* So when a carnall man ſerves Jeſus Chriſt, he ſaith, What will he give me? what can he doe for me? he cannot

cannot *ſerve God for nought*, that is, freely, as Satan charged *Job* in the beginning of this booke; *Job* ſerveth thee, ſaid Satan, becauſe thou haſt done ſo much for him, becauſe thou haſt ſerved his turne, and made a hedge about him; this was Satans ſlander upon that good man; but 'tis no ſlander to ſay ſo of carnall men, *Doe they ſerve God for nought?* They doe not, they cannot; if they may gaine by godlineſſe, they will doe ſomewhat, which ſhall have a ſhew of godlineſſe; profit will make any thing paſſe with and pleaſing to a carnall mind, though in it ſelfe it be never ſo diſpleaſing. Such is the nobleneſſe of the people of God, that though there be a reward in ſerving of him, yet they are ready to ſerve him without reward, they can ſerve him upon a bare command, abſtract from promiſes and profits, They can obey God as a Creator, though he ſhould not be a rewarder. Godlineſſe is profitable for all things, and hath the promiſe both of this life, and of that which is to come, yet a gracious heart loves Godlineſſe more then profitableneſſe, and eyes the worke of God more then his reward.

Further, for the opening of theſe words; Some reade thus, *What can the Almighty doe againſt them?* The Hebrew particle ſtands indifferently to both, and may be tranſlated *for*, or *againſt*, in which ſenſe we finde it in the 35th of this Booke, *ver.* 6, 7. *If thou ſinneſt what doſt thou againſt him?* That is, what hurt doſt thou to God? thy ſinne cannot reach, or wound him, what doſt thou againſt him? Thus here; *They ſay to the Almighty depart from us, and what can the Almighty do againſt them?* Surely the Almighty is not abie to hurt us; from him we expect no good, and from him we fear no evill. Were not theſe mighty men thinke you, who thought the Almighty could not match them? Theſe were mighty men indeed. Giants, ſons of *Anak* no doubt they were, but Giants in wickedneſſe. And ſo this reading gives us a further character or diſcovery of a wicked mans Spirit.

Si peccaveris quid ei nocebis, *propriè*, quid ei facies.

Hence Obſerve.

Some wicked men have this preſumption, that let God doe his worſt, he cannot hurt them.

I finde in Scripture a threefold falſe and preſumptuous apprè-

prehenſion, which evill men have of God while they are doing evill.

Firſt, Some preſume that God will protect them from evill while they doe evill. (*Mich.* 3. 11.) *The heads thereof judge for reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money, yet will they leane upon the Lord and ſay, Is not the Lord among us? none evill can come upon us.* Theſe were ſuch as made it their buſineſſe to breake the Law of God, yet they thought God would not ſuffer any trouble to breake in upon them.

Secondly, Others preſume that, at leaſt, God will not be ſo ſevere as to inflict thoſe evills which he hath threatned. The old world was threatned with a Deluge, but they could not beleeve God would make good his word, they even mockt at the credulity and ſimplicity of *Noah*, to ſee him build that great Ship or Arke upon the dry Land, as if he meant to ſayle his veſſel without water. As for them, they neither beleeved nor feared a flood. So they (Iſa. 5. 19.) will put the Lord to a triall, *Let him haſten his worke that we may ſee it*; let us ſee what he will doe, as if they had ſaid to the Prophet, you told us what he would doe, how ſevere he would be, what meaneth all your talke, we would ſee ſomething done. What will the Almighty doe againſt us? Surely nothing; he is not ſo ſtrict as you make him. The Prophet deſcribes the worſt of men, the *men ſetled on their lees*, ſpeaking thus (*Zeph.* 1. 12.) *They ſay in their heart, the Lord will not doe good, neither will he do evill*; that is, he will neither reward nor puniſh, he will neither helpe nor hurt. To ſay either of theſe is alike diſhonourable unto God; To ſay either much more both (though indeed to ſay either is to ſay both) is to ſay, not only that God is neither to be loved nor feared, but that he is not at all. It is the glory of God to doe the one as well as to doe the other, and unleſſe he could doe both, he could doe neither. (*Iſa.* 45. 7.) *I forme the light, and create darkneſſe*, (the darkneſſe of trouble is of God as much as the light of comfort) *I make peace and create evill*; the evill of puniſhment is as much the creature of God as peace is, and God doth as much appeare a Creator in the one as in the other; the doing of this kinde of evill doth as much ſhew the power, and providence of God, as the doing

ing of good; yet thoſe in the Prophet ſaid the Lord will doe neither; *He will neither doe good, neither will he doe evill.*

Thirdly, Thoſe in the Text were raiſed to a higher pitch of preſumption then both the former; For they ſaid, what can the Almighty doe againſt us? As if they had ſaid, Let him doe his worſt, we feare him not; To thinke that God will ſheild us from the evill which others threaten, or that he will not bring that evill upon us which himſelfe hath threatned, when we doe evill, are very high actings of preſumption, But to thinke that God can doe nothing againſt us, to thinke that the Arme of God is ſhorter then that it can reach us, or weaker then that it can over-power us; to thinke that we have out-growne divine juſtice, and are too big or too ſtrong to be dealt with by the Almighty is preſumption to madneſs; woe to thoſe ſinners who ſecure themſelves in the goodneſſe of God to them, more woe to thoſe who ſecure themſelves in Gods neglect of them, but above all, woe is their portion who ſecure themſelves as it were in the weakneſſe of God, even while in words they acknowledge his power; ſaying, What can the Almighty doe againſt us?

Thirdly, Others read the words thus; *They ſay to the Almighty depart from us, and what hath the Almighty done againſt them?* That is, what hurt hath God done them? They are troubled at the preſence of God; But what cauſe hath God given them to be troubled at his preſence? And then we may connect theſe words with the words of the 18th verſe; *What hath God done againſt them? yea he filled their houſes with good things*; that's all the dammage he did them? This is a fair ſence, and conſiſtent with the Originall Text: leaving the reader to his choyce; I ſhall onely give the obſervation which riſeth clearely from this.

God never giveth wicked men any juſt cauſe to be weary of him.

He never doth them any wrong, and he often gives them many a bleſſing, and have they any reaſon to bid him depart? he is uſually very patient towards them, and doth never bring any evill upon them till they have doubly deſerved it; and have they any reaſon to be diſpleaſed at that? yea whenſoever he puniſheth them in this world, he puniſheth them leſſe then

theirs

their sins deserve; indeed there is a punishment behind adæquate and commensurate to their sin, but they shall never be punished beyond what or more then their sin deserves, Seeing then their punishment in the next life, though it will be great beyond imagining, yet shall not be great beyond deserving; and all their punishments in this life are lesse then the demerit of their sinne) As was pænitentially confessed by *Ezra* in the name of the *Jewes* after they had been broken by the sword, and brought into captivity for their sin, *Chap* 9. 13. Seeing (I say) 'tis but thus with them when 'tis worst with them) What hath the Almighty done against them? is not all their destruction (meritoriously) from themselves?

Again, How much soever God punisheth them in this life, they have no reason to complaine, or *say to God depart from us*: for even those punishments are messages from God to awaken them out of their sinnes, and so to prevent worser punishments; therefore when God perceived that stubborne people going on in their sinnes, he telleth them he will smite them no more, as implying that it was his favour to smite them. (*Isa.* 1. 5.) *Why should ye be smitten any more, ye will revolt more and more.* Surely then such have no reason to *say to God, depart from us*, when he smites them, as if he did them either hurt or wrong, seeing he smites them, that they might returne unto him; Those judgements of God are a mercy, which are sent to teach man his duty. Now if the judgements of God have sometime mercy in them, and never have any injury in them, what hurt or injury can there be to man in the service of God? Hath the Almigty done any thing against them, whom he lovingly invites to the doing of his will? And yet some complaine of wrong when they are onely called to doe what is right, and cry out as if God hurt them, when he doth but governe them. The Lord calls his murmuring people to account about this thing (*Mich.* 6. 3.) *O my people, what have I done to thee* (that is, what hurt, what wrong have I done unto thee) *and wherein have I wearied thee, testifie against me*; As if he had said, thou hast nothing to bring against me in evidence, unlesse it be my kindness, as it follows (*ver.* 4.) *For I brought thee up out of the Land of Ægypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants, and I sent before thee, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people,*

people, remember, &c. Consider all my dealings with thee, all the deliverances I have wrought for thee, all the Statutes and Ordinances, all the Lawes and Commandements which I have given thee, and then let thy Conscience speake; What have I done unto thee, which is an evill to thee? or wherein have I wearied thee, in the things which I have required thee to doe? I have done many good works for thee, and I have commanded thee to doe many works, such workes as are not onely good in themselves, but good for them who doe them; for which of these is it that thou art weary of me? *There is not that wicked man in the world but God may say to him, what have I done to thee, or what have I called thee to do, that thou shouldest be weary of me?* that thou shouldest desire me to depart from thee? Thus if we reade the words in this latter sence; *What hath the Allmighty done against them?* They carry a reproofe of their ingratitude against God, who had not hurt them, yea who had done them good. If we read the words in the second sence; *What can the Allmighty do against them?* They carry a high contempt and slight of his power, as if God could doe them no hurt. If we reade the words in the first sence according to our translation (which I rather pitch upon) they carry (upon contrary termes) a like contempt of the power of God, as if he could do them no Good; *What can the Almighty doe for them?*

Vers. 18. *Yet he filled their houses with good things.*

The Hebrew is, *And he filled their houses with good things*; we translate *yet*, which better cleares the meaning and scope of the Text, according to our reading of the former verse; *They say to God, depart from us, and what can the Allmighty do for them? yet he filled their houses with good things*; As if he had said, they thought God could doe nothing for them, whereas indeed he did all for them; all the good they had, they had it from God, *He filled their houses*: that is, he gave them abundance; he did not onely put some good things into their houses, but he filled their houses with good things, they had a plentifull state, God gave them a rich portion in the good things of this world, his corne, his wine, his oyle, his flax, his gold, his silver,

Horum quidem domos ipse impleverat bonis. Jun. q. d *Dei beneficijs abusi sunt turpiter & tanquam de spoliis dei ipsius triumphaverunt.* Jun.

ver, were their portion. He filled them, and they rebelled againſt him; He beſtowed many benefits upon them, which they abuſed to ſerve their luſts, and vainly triumphed in what he freely gave them, as if they had been ſpoyles forcibly taken from him.

Hence Obſerve; firſt,

That God doth them good that are evill.

Chriſt perſwaded his hearers (and us in them) upon this account to love their enemies, *That they and we might be the children of our father which is in heaven; For he maketh his Sunne to riſe on the evill and on the Good, and ſendeth raine on the juſt, and on the unjuſt* (Matth. 5. 45.) As God hath ſome peculiar people, ſo he hath ſome peculiar bleſſings, and good things, which the world in common ſhares not in, but he hath a ſort of bleſſings, and good things, which are the common ſhare of the world; raine and Sunne, fat and ſweet, Gold and ſilver are ſuch good things as their hearts and houſes are often filled with, whoſe hearts and houſes are empty of goodneſſe. Theſe good things God gives them, who know no more why he gives them, then they did, why he did not ſuddenly bring evill upon them, of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 2. 4.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſſe, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſſe of God leadeth thee to repentance*; when God doth good to thoſe that are evil, whether it be by beſtowing good upon them, or by withholding evill, He doth it uſually for one of or both theſe reaſons.

Firſt, That they might repent and live; knoweſt thou not what Meſſage the goodneſſe of God brings? Speaks it not thus? *Repent, repent*; yea doth not divine goodneſſe (taking thee by the hand) leade thee to repentance?

Secondly, The Lord doth them good who continue in the evill of ſinne, that they might be left inexcuſable when the evill of wrath and puniſhment falls upon them; every mouth ſhall be ſtopped, and all the world of wicked ones become guilty before God, when they remember that they ſinned, and went on to ſinne againſt the God that fed them, againſt the God that cloathed them, againſt the God *that filled their houſes with good things*, and protected them in the uſe and injoyment of

of thoſe good things, with which he had filled their houſes.

Secondly, In that he doth not only give them good things, but filled their houſes with good.

Obſerve.

God giveth great portions of good things to wicked men.

They have not only enough to live upon, but they have enough to live comfortably upon, they have not only enough to live upon themſelves, but they have enough to lay up for their children after them; the Lord is not only good, but he is liberall and bountifull (in its kind) to the worſt of men: they whoſe hearts are ſhut to him, his hand is open to them; he is inlarged towards them who are ſtreightned towards him; And this is added not only to render the goodneſſe of God more glorious, but the ſin of man more ſinfull and odious in our eyes.

Whence obſerve; Thirdly.

Sin hath by ſo much the greater evill in it, by how much it is committed againſt the greater goodneſſe.

It is a horrible wickedneſs to *ſay to God depart from us*, though he empty our houſes of all good things, but it is much more horrible wickedneſſe, to ſay ſo when he filleth our houſes with good things. What? When God hath filled our houſes, ſhall we kicke him out of doors? This was the ſin of *Jeſurun, that when he waxed fat kicked*, as *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut.* 32. 15.) *Thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thicke, thou art covered with fatneſſe; Then he forſooke God which made him, and lightly eſteemed the rock of his Salvation.* Their ſin is great who lightly eſteem God while he makes them lean, but how ſinfull is their ſin, who ſlight God that hath made them fat. As good things received, bind us ſtronger unto duty, ſo good things abuſed, binde us ſtronger under guilt.

Fourthly, As we connect theſe words with the latter branch of the former verſe; *What can the Allmighty doe for them? yet he filled their houſes with good things.* We may take this obſervation.

Though Carnall men receive many good things from God, yet they know him not as the fountaine of them.

They who are evill cannot own God purely, either in good

or evill. It is but ſeldome that they ſay, with that wicked King, *This evill is of the Lord* (2 Kings 6. 33.) And it is ſeldomer that they ſay, this good is of the Lord. They ſay, what good doth God for us? even while he filleth their houſes with good things. Indeed the beſt of Saints receive many good things from God which they know not of; they receive many ſecret mercies, ſecret I meane not only to others, but to themſelves; and ſo they are not able to give God the glory of them diſtinctly, becauſe they have not a diſtinct knowledge of them. But all the good things which the wicked have are to them of an unknowne originall. Though they know what they have, yet they know not from whence or from whom they have what they have; they know not who feeds them, who cloaths them, who provides for them: yea though they make many formall acknowledgements of this, and will tell you of Gods goodneſs to them, yet really they know it not, nor doe they cordially acknowledge it. The Lord complaines of his people about this (*Iſa.* 1. 3.) *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſſe his Maſters cribb,* (he upbraids them not onely as below other men, but as below the beaſts, as if the reaſonleſſe creatures had acted more rationally then they) *but Iſrael doth not know, my people do not conſider*: What was it they did not know, nor conſider? they knew not nor conſidered what the Oxe and the Aſſe knew and conſidered; *The Ox knoweth his owner*, he knoweth that his Maſter feeds him, as well as works him. Thus alſo *the aſſe knoweth his maſters crib*, as he knoweth that his Maſter imployeth him, ſo he knoweth that his Maſter provideth for him. The dull Aſſe takes notice of the cribb, and knowes where and by whom he receiveth Good; but yee my people know not me, ye doe not conſider him that feeds you; For I *have nouriſhed and brought up children, & they have rebelled againſt me*, they never honoured me as the fountaine and founder of their felicity. The Prophet *Hoſea* reproves the ſame ſottiſhneſs and blindneſs in that people (*Chap.* 2. 8, 9.) *For ſhe did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oyl, and multiplyed her ſilver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. Therefore I will return and take away her corne in the time thereof*; As if the Lord had ſaid, I will make them know that I can take theſe things away, ſeeing they would not know, or at leaſt not acknowledge

ledge that I am he who gave them. Carnall men attribute their good things, and the filling of their houſes with them to any thing rather then to God. They thanke their friends or their good fortune: they thanke themſelves, their policy, their induſtry, for what they have. They aſcend not up to God in thankfulneſſe for what they have. They who ſay, *What can the Allmighty doe for them?* How ſhould they acknowledge, that the Allmighty hath done any thing for them? The Prophet (*Hab.* 1. 16.) ſpeaks of men *whoſe portion was fat, and their meat plenteous*; but to whom did they referre all this? whom did they acknowledge for their benefactor, or as the cauſe of thoſe great ſucceſſes? The Prophet tells us, *They ſacrificed to their nets, and burnt incenſe to their drags.* The words carry an alluſion to fiſhing, in which worke or art, netts and drags are the inſtruments of the fiſher-man; ſo that to ſacrifice to the net or to the dragge, is to give the honour and thanks of all our attainements to ſecond cauſes, and creature helps, to our owne wit, power, and induſtry, &c. To theſe ſaith the Prophet *they ſacrificed*, That is, they honoured them in the place or ſtead of God: *Sacrifice is proper and peculiar to God*, and therefore he that offers ſacrifice to any thing, makes it his God, or puts it in the place of God; They who thank themſelves for the good they have, are a God to themſelves. And thus we find the *Aſſyrian* aſcribing all to his owne power (*Iſa.* 10. 14.) *By the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdome, for I am prudent, and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures, and I have put down the Inhabitants like a valiant man*; he did not thinke that the Lord did it by his hand, *but* (ſaith he) *by the ſtrength of my hand I have done it: my right hand is my God, my wiſdome is my God.* Theſe, theſe, *have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures.* See how the Lord checks this inſolency (*ver.* 15) *Shall the axe boaſt it ſelfe againſt him that heweth therewith? or ſhall the ſaw magnifie it ſelfe againſt him that ſhaketh it?* Men (I grant) are living inſtruments, yet they can doe no more then inſtruments without life (the axe and the ſaw) unleſſe God act them, or act by them. An axe or a ſaw can doe as much without man, as man can doe without God, yet vaine proud man is as full of boaſting, as if he could doe, or had done all alone.

Dextera mihi deus. Virg. l. 10. Sanct.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Obſerve.

That the portion of wicked men lyeth all on this ſide heaven, and heavenly things.

God filleth their houſes with good things, but they are the good things of this life; they have nothing that reacheth to eternall life. They have nothing that concerns pardon of ſin, or grace, much leſſe have they glory for their portion. (*Acts* 14. 16, 17.) *God did not leave himſelfe without witneſſe* (amongſt the Heathen Nations) *in that he did good, and gave rain from heaven, and fruitfull ſeaſons, filling their hearts with food and gladneſſe*; ſo much they received from God, as filled them with food for their bodyes, and made their lives comfortable; but no more, that was all they had. As *Abraham* in the parable tells the rich man in hell (*Luke* 16. 25.) *Son remember that thou in thy life time haſt had thy good things.* And what were the good things which he formerly had? We have an anſwer at the 19th verſe, *He was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared deliciouſly every day.* As the Pſalmiſt is expreſſe (*Pſal.* 17. 14.) that *the men of this world have their portion in this life*, ſo, his purpoſe is to ſhew, that they have their portion in the things of this life; for he adds, *Whoſe bellyes thou filleſt with thy hid treaſures*, that is, with thoſe treaſures of corne, wine, and oyle, which are virtually hidden in the earth, and brought forth by the earth; God fills the bellyes of the wicked, but he fills the Spirits of the Godly; he fills the former with the hidden treaſures of the earth, he fills none but the latter with the hidden treaſures of heaven.

Laſtly, note.

That the gifts of God even in temporall things are free and undeſerved.

Not onely are ſpirituall gifts and graces, together with eternall life undeſerved, but even temporalls, and the things of this life. The Lord gives them unto his enemies, to thoſe that ſay to him, *depart from us*; and what do theſe deſerve at his hands, but ſtripes and death? He gave Chriſt to us while we were moſt unworthy of him; when we were yet enemies Chriſt dyed for us; ſinners doe no more deſerve bread then they deſerve Chriſt, we no more deſerve the comforts of this life then eternall life, The one is of free Grace to the Elect, and the other is of bounty and goodneſſe to the wicked. The old *Egyptians* (as ſome writers report them) were careſull to confeſſe the undeſervedneſſe of thoſe outward favours, the plenty and abundance of corne and cattel, with which *Egypt* was ſtored, in teſtification whereof they every year brought into the Temple of their Idol *Serapis*, a meaſure ſhewing how high the river *Nilus* roſe and overflowed its bankes (for *Egypt* being a flat Country, is watred by the over-flowings of *Nilus*) and by the riſing of thoſe waters they could (very probably) prognoſticate the plenty or ſcarſity of the year enſuing. And they therefore tooke an exact account how many cubits high the river ſwell'd, leaving it in the Temple of *Serapis*, thereby acknowledging (as ſome conceive) that their Idol God was the beſtower of all that plenty, or (as *Eliphaz* here ſpeaks) that he *had filled their houſes with Good things.*

Quoniam mortui in Egypto, in veteſtura deſcendentis Nili flaminis ad terram Serapis deferretur relata ex in veteri ad aream & inundationis auctorem ipſa ſe vlaclivo, unde ipſa id eſt, aqua menſura, ad aquarum diminutionem capta eſt in Eccleſias deferri. Caſſiod. lib. 2. ad Eccleſ. Hiſtor.

But the counſell of the wicked is farre from me.

We had theſe words before (*Chap.* 21. 16) *Job* made uſe of them there, and here *Eliphaz*, therefore I ſhall adde but little for explication in this place. In generall know, they are a *proverbiall ſpeech*, by which the abhorrence of our ſpirits concerning either things or perſons is ſet forth to the utmoſt; as when we ſay to any man, *be gone, depart from me*, or as Chriſt to Satan, *Get thee behinde me*, we ſhew our vehement deteſtation of his perſon. So when a man ſaith, ſuch or ſuch a thing *is farre from me*, his meaning is he utterly deteſts it, or that the thing is the very abomination of his ſoule. Therefore while *Eliphaz* ſaith, *The counſell of the wicked is farre from me*, it is, as if he had ſaid, *I cannot indure to have any thing to doe either with the wicked, or with their counſel. O my ſoul come not thou into their ſecret, unto their aſſembly, O mine honour be not thou united* (as dying *Jacob* beſpake his ſons *Simeon* and *Levi*, Gen. 49. 6.)

Puto Vulgarem eſſe dicendi modum, quo homines abjiciuntur exterantur & a ſe quam longiſſime Jubent. Quaſi ſum a page averti Deus. Pined.

But what is the counſell of the wicked? their counſell may be taken; firſt, for that diſhonourable opinion which they held of God, that he could doe nothing either for them or againſt them. I (ſaith *Eliphaz*) am of another minde, of another faith and perſwaſion. Their Counſel is farre from me who either

either deny the providence of God, or think they can hide themselves from the eye of his providence; I believe that his eye beholdeth all, and that his hand worketh whatsoever pleaseth him.

Secondly, Others by *Counsell* understand the scope of wicked men; so *Calvin* reads, *the intent of the wicked is farre from me*; I have other purposes and designes then they have; *The ploughing of the wicked* (saith *Solomon*, Pro. 21. 4.) *is sin*; that is, the stirring and plotting of his mind to get his desires satisfied is sinfull; I desire not (saith *Eliphaz*) to put my hand to their plough. *The counsell of the wicked is farre from me.*

Thirdly, As the designe and plot, so the course and way of the wicked *is farre from me*. The counsell of a man is put for the meanes by which he acteth his designes, as well as for the method in which he layeth them. We shall not wrong the drift of the Text in which soever of these three sences we understand this protestation, *The counsell of the wicked is farre from me.*

Againe, There is a threefold difference about the reading and relation of these words, which put together will give us yet a further light and understanding about them.

Quæ consilia illi in cunt longe sunt a deo.

First, The Septuagint reade thus; *The counsell of the wicked is farre from him*; and the antecedent, *to him* (according to their sence) is God himselfe. As if *Eliphaz* had said, the counsells and resolutions which the wicked take up, God cannot abide, *they are farre from him. His are holy, theirs are unholy counsels.*

Secondly, Others apprehend, that *Eliphaz* spake thus in the person of *Job*, and only reassumed what he had said (*Ch.* 21. 16.) *O this is the man that said even now the counsell of the wicked is far from me: Pray consider, this is the man that professed he would not so much as come neer a wicked man, he would have nothing to doe with their counsells, not he; He would be taken for a man of another spirit, of another frame then they; but see what he is, see how he joynes with them, how he walkes in their wayes, how he follows their counsells; though he denyes them with his lips, and makes strange as if he knew them not, yet indeed he is of the same peece and spirit with them: and while he saith, the counsell of the wicked is farre from me (behold his hypocrisie) the counsell of the wicked lieth in his bosome, and is embraced by him.*

Quasi Job ore tenus non reipsa impiorum consilium improbaret. q. d. *Nam poteris dicere, te non sentire cum improbis, cum tu, ut ipsi providentiam dei tollis.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Which is more plaine and cleare, we may expound these words not onely as spoken by *Eliphaz*, but as therein speaking of himselfe; *The counsell of the wicked is farre from me*; that is, I am a man of another straine, of another graine then they, I am a man of another mould and make then they. Therefore O *Job*, what you spake before I speake againe, and I speake it upon better grounds, with a better heart then you; you spake with your lips, or from the teeth outward, that *the counsell of the wicked is farre from you*, but I have proved that you approach too neere them both in course and councel, I say, what you said, but I say it (which you did not) in sincerity, I professe, and what I professe is true; that *the counsell of the wicked is farre from me. The same truth may be professed by different persons, upon different grounds and to different ends*: the same premises doe not alwayes yeeld the same conclusions in the minds of men, though in themselves they doe. *Eliphaz* thought his counsell as farre from *Jobs*, as *Job* had professed himselfe to be from the counsell of the wicked. When *Job* said, *The counsell of the wicked is farre from me*; his purpose was to shew that though he was afflicted like wicked men, yea that though he was afflicted while many wicked men were prospered, that yet he was not at all spirited or principl'd like wicked men. And that therefore his friends assertion must needs be false, who numbred him with the wicked because he was afflicted. *Eliphaz* seemes to retort this upon *Job*, and to say, if this be so, as thou affirmest, surely then God hath layd aside the care of this world, and lets all things run at six and sevens; for surely if he tooke notice of men, either what they were, or what they were doing, he would never suffer the wicked to prosper, no nor to escape unpunished. And seeing thou continuest so stiffe in thy opinion, that thou dost not suffer these grievous calamities for thy sinne, thou seemest to me plainely to comply with their blasphemy, who querie, *how doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?* This counsel of the wicked is farre from me. And seeing as *Job* before, so *Eliphaz* here ascribes counsell (which is the most deliberate act) to the wicked. We may observe.

Hæc sunt ipsius Eliphasi verba, quibus seipsum commendat, ut qui potiori jure quam Job, & multo verius possit asserere se toto cœlo ab impiorum sententia dissidare. Jun. Pisc

Eliphaz vult ex uno cum Jobo principio iisdemq; præmissis, contrariam efficere conclusionem. Bold.

First, *That wicked men sinne advisedly, or that many of their sinfull wayes, are studied wayes.*

And

And as the more ſtudied they are, the more ſinfull they are; ſo they ſtudy moſt for thoſe which are moſt ſinfull. They are not hurried into ſinne by paſſions or thruſt on upon ſinne meerly by the violence of temptation: They ſit downe and goe to counſell how they may compaſſe their ungodly purpoſes. A godly man doth not conſent unto ſinne, much leſſe doth he conſult about it; *The evill which I do I allow not; I* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *conſent to the law of God that it is good* (Rom. 7.) A godly man ſins dayly, but ſin hath not his conſent, or allowance when he hath done it, much leſſe doth he conſult or adviſe how to doe it. Sin doth not pleaſe him conſequently, much leſſe doth he project it antecedently. 'Tis the character of a wicked man, that his ſin is his counſell and that his art is in it as much as his nature: *The counſell of the wicked is farre from me.*

Secondly, *Eliphaz* doth not ſay how farre the counſell of the wicked was from him, but that it was farre from him, and *by farre*, he means *furtheſt*; as if he had ſaid, it is as farre from me as farre may be, I have no complyance with their counſels.

Hence obſerve.

That the ſpirit and way of the godly, and the wicked are as different as their end and concluſion ſhall be.

They are at furtheſt diſtance; They are like two paralel lines, which how farre ſoever they run together, they never meete together, nor touch in a poynt. The concluſion of a wicked man or his end is farre from that of the upright: the end of the one is light, the end of the other is darkneſſe: the one ends in ſorrow, the other in joy, the end of the one is peace, of the other trouble. And ſo the way of the one is ſinne, the way of the other is holineſſe; the way of the one is oppreſſion and covetouſneſſe, the way of the other is juſtice and righteouſneſſe; the way of the one is faith, the way of the other is unbeliefe. Now as darkneſſe and light, joy and ſorrow, peace and trouble, can never comply or be united; ſo neither can ſin and holineſſe, oppreſſion and juſtice, faith and unbeliefe. There's no communion between theſe contraries, betweene theſe wayes and ends, counſels and concluſions. And unleſſe we keepe farre from the counſels of the wicked, we cannot goe farre from their concluſion; nor can we avoyd their end, but by avoyding their way. The ſame way brings the ſame end, whether we reſpect good or evill. And hence it is that the Spirit of God by *Solomon* gives ſuch a vehement admonition, to beware of the way of wicked men (*Pro.* 4. 14, 15.) *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and goe not in the way of evill men; avoyd it, paſſe not by it, turne from it and paſſe away.* As in the former context, *he as a carefull father*, had preſſed his Sonne to the cloſeſt purſuit of wiſdomes way, ſo here, he as earneſtly preſſeth him, to depart from the path of wickedneſſe; He would have his ſonne not only not goe into it, but not ſo much *as paſſe by it*, that is, not goe near it; as the next words intimate, *turne from it*, as if he had ſaid, keep at a diſtance, keepe aloofe off, do not ſtay ſo long within ſight of it as to looke upon it, that's his laſt counſel, *paſſe away*, not to returne or come neer it any more. And while we conſider whither that way leads, we ſhall eaſily grant that when all is ſaid, little enough is ſaid to lead us away from it. Where the way is ſin, the wages is death. Therefore let him who deſires to avoyd the concluſion of the wicked, ſay; *The counſell of the wicked is farre from me.*

JOB, CHAP. 22. Verſ. 19, 20.

The righteous ſee it, and are glad, and the innocent laugh them to ſcorne.
Whereas our ſubſtance is not cut downe, but the remnant of them the fire conſumeth.

ELiphaz ſtill purſues the ruine, and exterpation of wicked men; he ſhewed us before the ſinfulneſſe of their practices towards man, and the folly of their opinion, *in ſaying to God depart from us*, who had never hurt them nor given them any cauſe to be weary of his preſence, unleſſe this diſpleaſed them, that *he filled their houſes with good things*. And becauſe they declared themſelves thus vaine, therefore *Eliphaz* rejected both them and their way, *The counſell of the wicked is farre from me*. Now, in this verſe he acquaints us with the event or iſſue of their counſels, and how the righteous carry themſelves, when God calls the wicked to an account and reckons with them for their prophanenesſe and irreligion.

Verſ. 19. *The righteous ſee it, and are glad.*

Who the righteous man is, and what denominates a man righteous, hath been ſhewed before. *The righteous ſee it*, what do they ſee? That which they beleeved and looked for; the fall of wicked men. This act of ſeeing may be referr'd either to the *perſon ſeeing*, or to the *object ſeene*: as 'tis referr'd to the perſon of the righteous; ſo *ſeeing* notes both their priviledge and their pleaſure. They are admitted to ſee this ſpectacle of divine Juſtice, and it is their happineſſe to ſee it. This *David* intimates (*Pſal.* 37. 34.) *Wait on the Lord, and keepe his way, and he ſhall exalt thee to inherit the Land, when the wicked are cut off thou ſhalt ſee it.* The righteous ſhall be honoured with this ſight, yea and pleaſed with it, the cutting off of wicked men by the hand of God. The righteous man hath a promiſe to ſee this (and promiſes are the conveyances of mercies (*Pſal.* 91. 8.) *A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee, only with thine eyes ſhalt thou*

Voluptatem importat hujſmodi effectus.

behold and ſee the reward of the wicked. Thou ſhalt be a ſpectator, not a partaker in that calamity. Wicked men ſometimes glutt their eyes with beholding the troubles of the Saints, and they account it a happy day, when they can have ſuch a ſight. They ſigne that day with a white ſtone, when the black ſtone of the moſt unjuſt and cruell condemnation proves the preſent lot of the righteous. *David* diſcovered ſuch a ſpirit in his enemies (*Pſal.* 35.21.) *They opened their mouth wide againſt me, and ſaid, aha, aha, our eyes have ſeen it.* What had they ſeen? The former verſe tells us; *They ſpeak not peace, but they deviſe deceitfull matters againſt them that are quiet in the Land.* When theſe deviſes tooke, and had ſucceſſe, then they were pleaſed, then they had what they would, and ſaw what they deſired. And thus the enemies of the Church are deſcribed (*Mic.* 4. 11.) *Now alſo many Nations are gathered againſt thee, and ſay, let her be defiled* (there is a twofold defiling, a defiling with ſin, & a defiling with bloud & miſery, the latter is meant by the Prophet, *let her be defiled*) *& let our eyes look upon Sion.* They counted it a bleſſed ſight to ſee *Sion* bleed; The wicked would have ſuch ſights often, though uſually their eyes fayle with waiting, and their hope is as the giving up of the Ghoſt; But righteous men ſhall ſee (the righteous God hath ſaid it) vengeance powred upon the wicked.

Againe we may expound this act of ſeeing with reference to to the object ſeen: and ſo it imports two things: firſt the certainty of their fall: wicked men ſhall undoubtedly be deſtroyed, and there ſhall be eye witneſſes, honeſt and faithfull witneſſes, teſtifying their deſtruction; *The righteous ſhall ſee it*, and report it to after generations.

Secondly. As ſeeing notes the certainty of their fall, or the evidence and cleareneſſe of it, ſo the publiqueneſſe of it; That which is done to the eye, is done openly. What the juſtice of God doth againſt the wicked ſhall not be done in a corner, but as upon the houſe top. The reading of the *Septuagint* is full to this ſence; *They ſhall be made publicke examples.* It is the care of juſt and wiſe Magiſtrates, not onely to puniſh malefactors, but to puniſh them openly, That ſo all may ſee and feare and doe no more preſumptuouſly. There are three ſpeciall reaſons why offences are puniſhed; and the Greekes expreſſe

παραδείγματισον. *Dentur rem omnibus conſpectam & in publicum exemplum propoſitam.*

presse each punishment by such a word as carryeth a distinct signification of those reasons. First, Some are punished, that themselves may amend and better their manners; This they called παραίνεσις. Secondly, Others are punished, to repayre the honour or maintaine the dignity of those against whom they have offended, lest if such should escape without condigne punishment, authority should be contemned, grow cheape, or be lightly valued; This they called τιμορία. A third sort were punished for example, that others might be deterred from the doing the same things, lest they also incurre the same sufferings; This was called παράδειγμα. As much as to say, the holding of a man forth in his sufferings to the open view, that he may be seene of all men, and that all may be warned to avoyd his error. And thus the Lord who is the righteous Judge of all the world punisheth wicked men. The same word is used by the Evangelist *Mathew* (Chap. 1. 19) *Joseph* being troubled that *Mary* was with childe (for he knew not the mystery of her over-shadowing by the Holy Ghost, *was minded to put her away secretly, and would not make her a publick example*; He was unwilling to bring her to justice, or that others should see either her (supposed) sin or punishment. But as God doth work many glorious salvations for his people, that the wicked may see it, and be ashamed; so he brings many visible destructions upon the wicked, not onely that the righteous may see it and *rejoyce*, or be glad (which act follows next to be opened) but that the wicked may see it, and tremble to doe wickedly.

1 παραίνεσις.
2 τιμορία.
3 παράδειγμα *Acerbitas ulciscendi maleficij, bene atq; caute vivendi disciplina est.* Cæcilius apud Gel. l. 2. c. 1.

Hence observe.

First, *That the Lord sets up wicked men many times as examples of his wrathfull justice.*

Not onely doe they feele wrath upon themselves, but others see it; The Lord sometimes chastens his own people in the view of the world, and sets them up as examples of his fatherly displeasure. Thus *Nathan* speaks in the name of the Lord to *David* (2 *Sam.* 12. 12.) *Thou didst it secretly, but I will doe this thing*, (what thing? I will afflict and chasten thee for this great offence) *before all Israel, and before the Sunne*, that is, in plaine and clear light: Though thou hast done this evill

vill in the darkness of many close contrivances, yet I will draw the curraine and make the pœnall effects of thy sinne as conspicuous as the actings of thy sin have been close and covert. Againe (*Numb.* 25. 4.) when the people began to commit whoredome with the daughters of *Moab*, and *Israel* had joyned himselfe unto *Baal peor*, so that the Anger of the Lord was kindled against *Israel*; *Then the Lord said to Moses, take all the heads of the people*, (that is, the capitall offenders, or chiefe rulers, who gave way, or at best gave no stop to such wickednesse) *and hang them up before the Lord against the Sunne, that the feirce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel.* To hang them up before the Sunne, is a phrase of speech importing the publicknesse of their punishment (as it is said of the seven Sons of *Saul*, that they were *hanged on the hill before the Lord*, 2 Sam. 21. 9.) for caution unto all; whatsoever is done in the sight of all, or so that all may see, is said (in the Language of the *Jewes*) to be done before the Sunne. To which sense also we may interpret that vision of the Prophet *Zechariah*, (Chap. 5, 6, 9, 10, 11.) at the 6th verse we reade of an *Ephah*, and this *lift up* (ver. 9th) *between earth and heaven*; the *Ephah* was a measure of dry things among the *Jewes*: and in that vision it signified that the sinne and punishment of the *Jewes* were measured and proportioned; This *Ephah* being lifted up and carried, *I* (saith the Prophet) *said, whether doe these bear the Ephah?* (ver. 10.) *And he said unto me, to build it an house in the land of Shinar, and it shall be established and set there upon her own base*; The building it an house in the land of *Shinar* (that is, in *Babylon*) signified the lastingnesse or continuance of their sinne in the sad consequents of it, their punishment and banishment in strange lands, not for the space of seventy yeares onely, as by the *Babylonians*, but (as some of the Learned expound the vision) for many seventyes by the *Romanes*: and as this *Ephah* had a house built for it, noting the setlednesse and duration of the Judgement which should come upon them for their sinne; so also it was set upon its own base, to signifie the notoriousnesse or conspicuousnesse of the Judgement, it being as a house set upon pillars for all to behold and take notice of: as we see fulfilled to this day, since the first overthrow of their estate by *Titus Vespatianus*, & their final dispersion by *Ælius Adrianus*.

There

There are, I grant other conceptions about that viſion, but as this ſuits well with the poynt in hand, ſo with the calamitous ſtate of that people to this day.

And thus the Lord threatned the King of *Tyrus* (*Ezek.* 28. 17.) *Whoſe heart was lifted up becauſe of his beauty, and who had corrupted his wiſdome by reaſon of his brightneſſe.* Now what will the Lord doe? what courſe will he take with him? The next words enforme us; *I will caſt thee to the ground, and I will lay thee before Kings, that they may behold thee*; He doth not ſay, *I will caſt thee into the ground*, but *to the ground, and lay thee before Kings*; that is, thou ſhalt be a ſpectacle for all the Kings of the Earth, that they may behold as what thy pride and ſelfe-confidence have brought thee to, ſo what their owne (if they tread thy path) either will or juſtly may bring them unto. Thus alſo in the (7th verſe of *Judes* Epiſtle, the Apoſtle ſaith, *that Sodome and Gomorrah, and the Cities about them in like manner, giving themſelves over to fornication, and going after ſtrange fleſh, are ſet forth for an example, ſuffering the vengeance of Eternal fire.* The Judgements of God are not onely puniſhments to them who went before, but premonitions to them who come after.

The righteous ſee it, and are glad.

Here is the effect which that ſight wrought upon the righteous: *The eye affects the heart*, and the heart is affected ſuitably to the object, either with joy or with ſorrow. The deſtruction of men is a ſorrowfull object, and therefore we might rather expect that the righteous beholding it ſhould be affected with ſorrow; but the Text affirms a direct contrary effect of this ſight; *The righteous ſee it, and are glad.*

Hence obſerve.

The judgements of God upon the wicked are matter of joy to the righteous.

It is the duty of the Saints *to mourne with them that mourne, and to rejoyce with them that rejoyce* (Rom. 12. 15.) But then we muſt underſtand theſe mourners and rejoycers to be ſuch as themſelves are. Saints muſt mourne with mourning Saints, and rejoyce with rejoycing Saints. The godly are not bound either

either to joy the joyes, or ſorrow the ſorrowes of the wicked. The judgements of God upon the wicked have a twofold effect eminently noted in Scripture. Firſt, they cauſe feare; and Secondly, they cauſe Joy. When exemplary juſtice was to be done (according to the law of *Moſes*) upon preſumptuous tranſgreſſours, It is ſaid (*Deut.* 13. 11.) *All Iſrael ſhall hear, and feare, and ſhall doe no more any ſuch wickedneſſe. David* (Pſal. 64.) having complained to God in prayer of the cruelty of his enemies, and begged protection from their malicious practiſes, growes up to much aſſurance, that down they muſt (*v.* 7, 8.) *But God ſhall ſhoot at them with an arrow, ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded*; and then (*v.* 9.) *All men ſhall feare, and ſhall declare the worke of God, for they ſhall wiſely conſider of his doings.* Thus fear is the iſſue of divine judgement; And yet joy is the iſſue of them at the 10th verſe of the ſame Pſalme, *The righteous ſhall be glad in the Lord, and truſt in him, and all the upright in heart ſhall glory.* Feare is a common effect; *All men ſhall fear*: Gladneſſe, faith and glorying, (which is faith triumphant) are peculiar to the upright, when the arrow of God wounds the wicked. We have this double effect againe expreſt upon the ſame occaſion (*Pſal.* 107. 42.) *He powreth contempt upon Princes, and cauſeth them to wander in the wilderneſſe where there is no way, but he ſets the poor on high; the righteous ſhall ſee it and rejoyce.* What ſhall they ſee? not only the Godly poor ſet on high, but ungodly Princes filled with contempt, that's part of the ſpectacle which the righteous ſhall behold, and beholding rejoyce: yet this is not all, for it follows; *And all iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth*; The abſtract is put for the concrete, iniquity for men of iniquity: And ſo the meaning is men of iniquity, or wicked men ſhall ſtop their mouths; their mouths ſhall be ſtopt with ſhame and feare, they ſhall have nothing to ſay when the Lord doth this; They ſhall not mutter a word againſt the workes of God: but as *Hannah* ſpeaks in her Song (1 *Sam.* 2. 9.) *ſhall be ſilent in darkneſſe.* A like report raiſeth the hearts of the people of God into a holy merriment (*Pſal.* 97. 8.) *Sion heard, and was glad, the daughters of Judah rejoyced.* What was the matter? what good newes came to *Judah*? what to *Sion*? the Text reſolves us; *Becauſe of thy judgements O Lord*: The anſwer is not, *becauſe of thy mercies*, or becauſe of thy goodneſſe O Lord,

 but

but becauſe of thy judgements, and thoſe were dreadfull ones (*ver.* 3.) *A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about. Confounded be all they that ſerve graven Images*, &c. ver. 7. *Sion heard of it, and was glad.* Once more (*Pſal.* 58. 10.) *The righteous ſhall rejoyce when he ſeeth the vengeance, he ſhall waſh his feete in the bloud of the ungodly.* Not that the righteous delight in bloud, or proudly inſult over the worſt of enemies; the Pſalmiſt doth only in hyperbolicall ſtraines of Eloquence, borrowed from the language of triumphant conquerers, expreſſe a compleate and glorious victory. The ſtile is of the ſame ſignification with that (*Pſal* 68. 23.) *That thy foot may be dipped in the bloud of thine enemies, and the tongue of the dogs in the ſame.* When ſo much bloud is ſhed that the foot may be dipt and waſhed in it, that doggs may lay it up like water, this argues a great deſtruction, and when the wicked are thus deſtroyed, the righteous ſhall rejoyce.

But here it may be queried, What matter of joy is this? why ſhould the righteous rejoyce in the ſorrowes of the wicked? is it not alike ſinfull to be troubled at the joyes, and to rejoyce at the troubles of our brethren? The light of nature condemns rejoycing over thoſe who are in miſery; and we have an expreſſe Scripture againſt it (*Pro.* 24. 17.) *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, let not thy heart be glad when he ſtumbleth.* And *David* puts it among the ſins of his enemies (*Pſ.* 35. 15.) *In my adverſity they rejoyced.* And he profeſſed (*ver.* 13.) *that when they were ſicke his cloathing was ſackecloath, and that he humbled his ſoule with faſting. David* was ſo far from rejoycing when his enemies were ruined, or dead, that he mourned when they were but ſick, and would not eate, when they could not. And as *Davids* holy practice denyed it, ſo doth *Solomons* divine precept; *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth.* How then ſhall we reconcile theſe Texts?

I anſwer, there may be a rejoycing at the afflictions and troubles of others, which is not only unbecoming and unſeemly for the righteous; but very ſinfull. As

Firſt, To rejoyce, and be glad, meerely becauſe an enemy is fallen into miſery, is both unſeemly and ſinfull. And ſo we are to underſtand *Solomons* Proverb; *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth.* Some underſtand this of falling into ſinne. He

makes

makes himſelfe a ſinner indeed, who rejoyceth becauſe another hath ſinned. He that rejoyceth becauſe another hath ſinned, rejoyceth upon the matter becauſe God is diſhonoured. Such joy is a kinde of thanksgiving for Satans victory. But as to rejoyce becauſe another falls into ſin, is the worſt fall into ſinne; ſo to rejoyce meerly becauſe an enemy falls into miſery, is worſe, then our own falling into miſery. He ſhews that he hath not the heart of a man in him, who is glad at the miſery of any man. And he who rejoyceth thus when his enemy falleth, doth himſelfe fall much worſe. The ruin and down-fall of an enemy (ſuppoſe him the vileſt enemy) conſidered in it ſelfe, is meate and drink to none but revengefull and envious ſpirits. *David* was much troubled and chargeth it as an extreame peece of folly upon himſelfe, *Becauſe he was envious at the fooliſh when he ſaw the proſperity of the wicked* (Pſal. 73. 3.) Now it is an iſſue flowing from the ſame principle, purely to envy the proſperity, and purely to rejoyce in the adverſity of the wicked. *Nero* was juſtly reckoned a monſter among men, who could ſing when himſelfe had ſet *Rome* a fire: And they have ſome-what of a Neronian ſpirit in them, who can ſing when they ſee their enemies conſuming in the fire. God delights not in the miſery of man (as it is miſery upon man) nor doe they, who are taught of God.

Secondly, As to rejoyce or be glad at the deſtruction of enemies, meerely becauſe they are deſtroyed; ſo to rejoyce upon private ends or reſpects, becauſe they being taken out of the way and removed out of the world we hope to have more ſcope and roome in the world for our ſelves; or becauſe we hope to ſtep into their places, to ſit downe in their ſeates, to poſſeſſe our ſelves of their lands and riches, to fill our ſelves with their ſpoyles; upon this account to rejoyce when wicked men fall, when the Lord powres out contempt upon Princes, (becauſe (I ſay) we hope to be gainers by it) is altogether uncomely for the righteous. Let the righteous take heed to themſelves, that they be not found thus rejoycing in the calamities of the wicked. They who doe ſo are either but pretenders to godlineſſe, men who are onely of the faction of the righteous (for though they who are righteous indeed are farre from a faction, yet there are a ſort of men, who profeſſe righ-

teouſneſſe as if it were nothing but a faction, now (I ſay) they who thus rejoyce are but either of the faction of the righteous) while they are really of the number of the wicked, or if they are really righteous who doe ſo, and I confeſſe that a righteous man may doe ſo, *David* which was acting the counter-part) envied their proſperity, and by the ſame reaſon any godly man may be acted out in joy at their adverſity, but now, (I ſay) if they who are really righteous doe ſo) we muſt conclude them under a ſore temptation, and they will at laſt conclude of themſelves as *David* did in the counter-caſe, (*Pſal.* 73. 22.) *ſo fooliſh have we been and ignorant, even as a beaſt before thee.*

You will ſay then, how may or do the righteous rejoyce when the ungodly fall, and not fall into ſin themſelves?

I anſwer, Firſt, The righteous rejoyce at the fall of the wicked, as bleſſing God who hath kept their feete from thoſe wayes in which the wicked have fallen; As 'tis a great mercy to be kept out of thoſe ill wayes, to be kept from ſiding with thoſe corrupt intereſts, in the purſuit of which we ſee many broken; ſo 'tis a duty to rejoyce that we have not walked in their way whoſe end we ſee to be nothing elſe but deſtruction.

Secondly, The righteous have cauſe to rejoyce and bleſſe God when they ſee the wicked fall, becauſe themſelves are ſaved, and keep their ſtanding; becauſe themſelves have eſcaped the danger, and the Lord hath been a banner of protection over them in the day when the wicked fell. *Moſes* after the deſtruction of *Amaleck built an Altar, and called the name of it Jehova-Niſſi* (*Exod.* 17. 15.) that is to ſay, *The Lord is my banner.* And in like caſes the joy of the Saints is not properly in the deſtruction of the wicked, but in their own deliverance, through the mighty power and good hand of God with them. It is the preſence of God with them, the appearance of God for them, which is the gladneſſe of their hearts.

Thirdly, The righteous then rejoyce, becauſe the Church and people of God are in a fayre way to peace; when the Lions are deſtroyed, the ſheepe are in ſafety; when the Wolves and the Bears are cut off, the flock reſts quietly; ſo in this caſe when men of devouring cruell ſpirits, wicked and ungodly ones, are removed, the flocke of God, the ſheepe of his paſture feede

feed quietly, none making them afraid. The fall of the enemies of *Sion*, is the eſtabliſhment of *Sion*; yea in a great meaſure of mankinde. As the Prophet moſt elegantly ſets it forth (*Iſa.* 14. 6, 7, 8.) *He who ſmote the people in wrath with a continuall ſtroke, he that ruled the Nations in anger, is perſecuted and none hindereth; The whole earth is at reſt, and is quiet: they break forth into ſinging, yea the fire-trees rejoyce at thee, and the Cedars of Lebanon, ſaying, ſince thou art laid down no feller is come up againſt us.* How often have wicked men in power felled not onely the Firre-trees and Cedars of the world, but the goodly trees of righteouſneſſe in the Lords plantations; have they not therefore reaſon to ſing when ſuch fall, ſeeing the Fellers themſelves are then felled and fallen.

Fourthly, Joy ariſeth to the righteous, becauſe God is honoured in the fall of wicked men; And that's their chiefeſt joy. That God is honoured is more joy to the righteous, then that themſelves are ſaved, how much more then, then that the wicked are deſtroyed. There is a threefold honour ariſing to God when the wicked fall.

Firſt, God is honoured in his juſtice; ſuch a day *is the day of the declaration of the righteous judgement of God*; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the great day of Judgement (*Rom.* 2. 5.) *Thou after thy hardneſſe and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up to thy ſelfe wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God.* Some doe even queſtion the juſtice of God when wicked men proſper, but he is vindicated in his juſtice when wicked men fall; It cannot but pleaſe righteous men, to ſee the righteous God exalted, or God exalted in his righteouſneſſe. They know and beleeve that God is righteous, when the wicked proſper (*Jer.* 12. 1.) But when the wicked are puniſhed, they proclaime his righteouſneſſe. Then *they ſing the ſong of Moſes the ſervant of God, and the ſong of the Lamb, ſaying, Great and marvailous are thy workes Lord God Almighty, juſt and true are thy wayes thou King of Saints. Who ſhall not fear thee O Lord, and glorifie thy Name,* &c. *for thy judgements are made manifeſt,* (Rev. 15. 3, 4.) The Lord is alwayes alike Juſt, but it doth not alwayes alike appeare how juſt he is. And as that God is juſt is the faith and ſtay of the Saints, ſo the appearances of his juſtice are their joy and triumph.

Secondly,

Secondly, God is honoured much in the attribute of his truth; in the truth of his word, in the truth of his threatenings, when the wicked are punished. God hath spoken bloudy words concerning wicked men; not onely in reference to their future estate in the next life, but to their present estate in this. *Say to the wicked it shall be ill with him, the reward of his hands shall be given him.* But what is this reward? There are two sorts of rewards; First, rewards of love and favour according to the good which we have done; Secondly, rewards of wrath and anger, pœnal rewards, according to the evill which we have done. Now when the Lord puts these pœnall rewards into the hands of the wicked, or powres them upon their heads, he is honoured in his truth as well as his justice, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. As *the promises are yea and Amen* (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) so also are the threatnings, *unto the glory of God by us.* But as when *David* saw his life in danger every day, he began to question the truth of God, in the promise, that he should live to reigne and sit upon the throne of *Israel*; for saith he (*Psal.* 116. 11. when things went thus with him) *I said in my hast all men are lyars*, even *Samuel* among the rest, who assured me of the Kingdome by expresse message from God, but surely he also is deceived, and hath fed me with vaine hopes. Now as these words of *David* according to our translation of them, and the truth of the thing in frequent experiences, shew, that Godly men are apt to question the truth of the promise, when themselves are by seemingly contradicting providences much afflicted; so they are apt to question the truth of the threatnings when they see outward providences prospering the wicked; Therefore when the threatnings have their actuall *yea and Amen*, that is, when they are executed upon the ungodly, this also is *to the glory of God by us*, that is, God is glorified by all his people, who heare of it in the truth of what he hath spoken. Againe, as God is magnified in the truth of his threatnings, when any particular wicked man is punished; so when common calamities come upon the wicked, the truth of God or God in his truth is magnified two wayes. First, As such calamities are a fullfilling of many Prophecies; Secondly, As they are the answer or returne of many prayers. The vengeance which falls upon the Enemies of the Church of God

God is drawne out by prayer, *Luke* 18. 7, 8. And there is nothing wherein God is more honoured, then when prayer is answered; For as therein he fulfills our wants, so his owne word; *Who hath not said to the seede of Jacob, seeke ye me in vaine?*

Thirdly, When the wicked fall the Lord is honoured in the attribute of his power; How great is his power, who pulls down great power? It argues the Allmightinesse of God, when he puts the mighty from their seates: when the Oaks and the Cedars, when the high walls and mountaines are shaken and removed by his blowes and batteries. When *Pharoah* and his Ægyptian hoast were drowned in the red Sea; Then *Moses* magnified God in his power (*Exod.* 15. 2.) *The Lord is my strength and song* (that is, I will sing of the strength of the Lord, not of the strength of man) *he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my fathers God and I will exalt him.*

In these three attributes, justice, truth, and power, God is honoured, when the wicked are destroyed, and therefore it cannot be uncomly for the Saints to rejoyce when they are destroyed. The Lord by his prophet assures the Church his *Jacob*, that all the enemies thereof shall be scattered (*Isa.* 41. 15.) *behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, thou shalt thresh the Nations & beat them small, & shalt make the hills as chaffe*, &c. The mountains & the hills to be threshed, were the mighty ones of the earth, setting themselves against the wayes & designes of heaven. The Instrument or style wherewith they were to be threshed was the *worme Jacob* (*ver.* 14.) God did not so much make an Instrument for the *worme Jacob*, as he made the *worme Jacob* his Instrument. *Behold, I will make thee*, (not for thee) *a new threshing Instrument*; But when the worme hath done this great worke, when he hath threshed the mountaines, and made the hills as chaffe; What must he doe then? The 16th verse tells, *Thou shalt rejoyce in the Lord, and shalt glory in the holy one of Israel.* Glorying is more then rejoycing: Glorying is a kinde of rapture or extasie of the soule. As there is an extasie of Infatuation, so there is an extasie of Gratious admiration. Fooles and mad men are besides themselves for want of reason; the wisest and best of men, are besides themselves through the aboundance of the Grace of God in them,

Gaudebunt de eorum exitio, non vindicta cupiditate, sed zelo dei accensi qui hoc modo declarabit sibi cura esse res humanas. Drus.

and

and the aboundance of the goodneſſe of God towards them. When the goodneſſe of God acted mightily towards us, meets with the Grace of God acting mightily in us, we are lifted up ſo farre out of our ſelves, that we can ſee nothing in our ſelves, and then in whom or in what can our rejoycing be, *but in the Lord the holy one of Iſrael.*

This joy is not, Firſt, the joy of the Epicure; A ſenſuall joy, in wine and belly cheare, in eating the fat, and drinking the ſweete, in carnall merriments and muſick; nor is this, Secondly, a cruel joy in the ruin and deſtruction of men, which the Prophet rebukes (*Obad. v.* 12.) *Thou ſhouldeſt not have rejoyced over the children of Judah in the day of their deſtruction.* Nor is this, Thirdly, a proud joy, or a joy of oſtentation, when men ſpread their plumes, and publiſh their own wiſdome, greatneſſe and power; nor is it, Fourthly, a covetous joy, ſuch as theirs is who are glad becauſe they have fill'd their purſes, enriched their familyes, and their hand hath gotten much; Nor is it Laſtly, a ſecure joy, becauſe when evill men are caſt down we hope to ſit warme and well, ſafe and quiet upon their ruines; But this joy conſiſts: firſt, in high thoughts and valuations of God; *Whom have I in heaven but thee,* &c. (*Pſal.* 73. 25.) *Who is like unto thee O Lord among the Gods* (*Exod.* 15. 11.) It conſiſts, ſecondly, in a ſweete reſt or complacency in God. *Returne unto thy reſt O my ſoule*; that is, turne in to God, live neerer him ſaith a Godly man (to his ſoul) in ſuch a caſe (*Pſal.* 116. 7.) This joy is the reſt of the ſoule in God; He who is reſt to himſelf (as God is) may be ſo infinitely more to us. Thus, *The righteous ſee it, and are Glad.*

And the innocent laugh them to ſcorne.

This heightens the ſence of the former part of the verſe, not only are the righteous glad when the wicked are deſtroyed, but they *laugh them to ſcorne*, *The righteous*, in the former part of the verſe are the ſame *with the innocent* here; yet we may diſtinguiſh them. The innocent are taken two wayes in Scripture firſt, the innocent are they who are pure from ſin: ſecondly, the innocent are they who are pure or free from puniſhment, or

from trouble; freedome from ſin, and freedome from trouble are ſo dependant upon one another, that one word may well expreſſe both. Thus the word is uſed (2 *Sam.* 14. 9.) *The woman of Tekoah ſaid to the King; My Lord O King the iniquity be on me, and my fathers houſe, & the King & his throne be guiltleſſe or innocent*, that is, free from all evill and trouble. While ſhe ſaith, *The iniquity be upon me.* her meaning is, *let the puniſhment of the iniquity be upon me, let the King & his throne be guiltleſſe*; let no puniſhment of iniquity fall either upon the King in perſon, or upon his government. In the ſame ſence the word is read (*Exod.* 19. 21.) *If he* (that hath been ſmitten) *riſe again and walke abroad upon a ſtaffe, then he that ſmote him ſhall be quit*; the Hebrew is, *then ſhall he be innocent*, that is free from puniſhment, he ſhall not have any cenſure, or judgement for it. We have the like uſe of the word (*Numb.* 5. 19.) in the caſe of the woman ſuſpected by her huſband for diſloyalty in breaking her marriage vow; ſhe being for her purgation to drink the *bitter water*, the Prieſt was to beſpeak her in this manner: *If no man hath lien with thee, and if thou haſt not gone aſide to uncleaneſſe with another in ſtead of thy husband, be thou free* (or innocent) *from this bitter water that cauſeth the curſe*, that is; let the water doe thee no harme; as if he had ſaid; *thou ſhalt feele no evill of pain by it, if thou art not guilty of the evill of ſin.* Thus ſome expound the word here. *The innocent ſhall laugh them to ſcorn*, that is, they who are free from thoſe troubles with which the wicked are over-taken and undone, thoſe particular righteous men who eſcape the ſtorme untouched, *laugh the wicked to ſcorne.* Many of the Hebrew writers fixe upon a ſpeciall perſon; and by the *Innocent*, underſtand *Noah*, as if it were a report of what was done upon the old world; Then *the righteous*, that is (as the Chaldee Paraphraſe explaines it) the ſons of righteous *Noah ſaw* (the flood) *and were glad*, and innocent *Noah* laught the prophane old world to ſcorne. When *Noah*, and his ſonnes were building the Ark, the old world in ſtead of beleeving and fearing the report or prophecy of a deluge, laught them to ſcorne, and in deriſion, doubtleſſe, ask't them what voyage they intended, and whether they meant to ſaile their Ship over the dry Land; as for them they never dreamt of a Sea hanging in the clouds, and ready to drop downe upon their heads. Now as the ungodly world derided *Noah* and his Sons for their credulity be-

Innocens in Scriptura ſumitur, non ſolùm activè, pro eo qui nemini nocet, ſed etiam paſſivè, pro eo cui nemo nocet.

Innocens eris ab aquis iſtis amariſſimis. Heb.

Videbant filij Noë juſtè et lætabantur, & Noe innocens ſubſannabit eos Targ:

fore the flood came, so 'tis probable enough that when the flood came upon that world of the ungodly, *Noah* and his Sons laught at and derided their incredulity. *They who laugh at divine threatnings, deserve to be laughed at under divine sufferings.*

Others apply this particularly to the Tragedy of *Pharoah* and his Egyptians overwhelmed & drowned in the red Sea; of which it is said, (*Exod.* 14. 30, 31.) *Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the shoare, and Israel saw that Great worke, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians.* The effect of this sight is two wayes described in that holy History: First, by the acting of feare and faith: *And the people feared the Lord, and beleeved the Lord and his servant Moses*: Secondly, by the acting of their joy in the Lord, and their holy insultation over the drowned Egyptians (*Ch.* 15. *v.* 1.) *Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this Song unto the Lord, and spake saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the Sea.* Thus also that innocent people saw the ruine of their wicked enemies, *and laughed them to scorn.*

Yet I conceive *Eliphaz* speaking here rather upon a generally experienced and positive truth, then strictly and particularly aiming at those ancient Examples. *The Innocent*, that is any innocent person, whether innocent in reference to the doing of evill, or having escaped the sufferance of evill, *laugh them to scorn.*

Before, he said, *the righteous see it, and are glad*, now he saith, *the innocent laugh them to scorne*: it is one thing for a man to be glad in himselfe, and another thing to laugh other men to scorn: for though to *be innocent* carries in it somewhat lesse, or at the most but so much as to be righteous, yet to laugh the unrighteous and wicked to scorne when they fall, carries in it much more then to be glad when they fall. And besides, the word in the Hebrew signifies the most scornfull laughter, such a laughter as is expressed, by a distortion of the mouth, and lips, or by a kind of fained lisping with the tongue, and artificiall faultring in speech; For as they that lisp and faulter in speech are usually derided and laught at, so they that deride and laugh at others will purposely lispe, or faulter in speech. Stammerers are contemptible, and many stammer at others in contempt; *This imitation of a defect in nature shewes the excesse of malice.* Such is the force of this expression, *The innocent laugh them to scorne.*

לעג *denotat gestum qui sit ore, labijs, & ficta balbutie, sive quod balbutientes irrideri solent, sive quod irrisores balbutiant, per contemptum et malignam imitationem.*

Here

Here it may be questioned, how a good man, an innocent person can do such a thing; can he thus laugh the wicked to scorn? it is difficult enough to salve it as consistent with Grace, for a righteous man to rejoyce at the fall of the wicked, but it is farre more difficult to salve it, how a righteous man may laugh them to scorn; scorning and deriding are the practices of lewd persons, of sons of *Beliall*; such indeed are usually scorners and jeerers. The enemies of Jesus Christ are so described (*Psal.* 22. 7.) *All they that see me* (that is, all the wicked that see me, for many Disciples saw Christ in his sufferings, and did not only pity him, but honour and beleeve on him, but (saith he) *all they* (who are mine enemies) *that see me*) *laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, and shake the head.* And *David* tells us (*Psal.* 1. 1.) that to *sit in the seate of the scornefull*, is the conclusion of those who have first *walked in the way of the ungodly*, and secondly, *stood in the way of sinners.* The common Latine translater renders that in the *Psalm*, not the seate of scorners, but the seate of the pestilence. And indeed they have spirituall plague-spots upon them, and the surest tokens of eternall death, who are given up to be scorners. Therefore question it againe, how are the Innocent scorners?

I answer, That as when humane affections, which are below the divine nature are attributed to God, (such are *to repent, to be grieved at the wickednes, and to laugh at the calamity of the wicked*) we say these note onely an effect upon the creature, not a change of affection in God (for, in him there is no variablenesse nor shadow of change) so when those actions, which are below or unsutable to a renewed regenerate nature in man, are attributed to the Saints (such as these, *to wash their feete in the blood of the ungodly, to laugh them to scorne in their saddest miseries*) we must say, that these note rather what the wicked deserve, then what the godly do. The godly are no scorners, but there is that in wicked men which is worthy to be laughed to scorne, or wicked men do that, for which they deserve to be laughed at, whatsoever is evil in such like actions, is farre from the heart and spirit of the godly. And therefore as Scriptures of such a tenour are to be interpreted and understood in such a manner as becomes & is consistent with the holiness of God, so also (in their proportion) to the holines of the Saints. The laughter of the Saints in these dispensations is serious, and their scorning, the acting of their graces, not of their cor-

Irrisio, & ἐπικαρεκακία & similia quæ affectum humanum significant, ita a deo longe absunt, ita quæ mali moris sunt ab ecclesia. Coc

Ut hæc de deo θεοπρεπῶς ita de sanctis ἁγιοπρεπῶς sunt intelligenda.

corruptions. And thus it is said of God himselfe (*Pſ.* 2.4.) *He that ſitteth in heaven ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.* And (*Prov.* 1. 26.) *I will mock at your calamity, and laugh when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction commeth as a whirlwind*, &c. that is, I will carry my ſelfe ſo towards you, I will pity you (who have been ſcorners of my word, *and have ſet at nought my counſel*) no more then men pity thoſe whom they laugh to ſcorn; ſuch is the laughter of the Saints at the calamity of the wicked. And thus *Eliah* derided *Baals* Prieſts, while they wearied themſelves in their fooliſh ſuperſtition (1 *Kings* 18. 27.) *And it came to paſſe at noon that Eliah mockt them, and ſaid cry aloud, for he is a God, either he is talking*, &c. Thus *Hieruſalem* is expreſſed (*Iſa.* 37. 22.) when *Senacharib* ſent up that proud threatning meſſage, the Lord ſent a comfortable meſſage to his people by *Iſaiah* the Prophet; *Thus ſaith the Lord God of Iſrael, whereas thou haſt prayed to me againſt Senacherib the King of Aſſyria, this is the word which the Lord hath ſpoken concerning him; the virgin the daughter of Zion hath deſpiſed thee, and laughed thee to ſcorne, the daughter of Jeruſalem hath ſhaken her head at thee.* The daughter of *Zion*, and the daughter of *Jeruſalem* are but one and the ſame; ſhe was called a virgin, not (as ſome have conceived) becauſe ſhe was never taken or forced by any enemy; nor was ſhe ſo called, becauſe ſhe had preſerved her ſelf pure & chaſt in the worſhip of the true God (For ſhe had her failings and Idolatrous dailiances before that day) but ſhe was ſo called becauſe of that ſpeciall care which God had of her to protect and ſave her againſt the inſultations of the enemy then ready to aſſault her even as a virgin is protected from violence in her fathers houſe. And the Prophet to aſſure them that it ſhould be ſo, ſpeakes of the ruine of *Senacharibs* Army, and *Jeruſalems* laughter, as accompliſht and come to paſſe already; *The virgin daughter* &c. *hath deſpiſed thee, and laughed thee to ſcorn, and ſhaken her head at thee.* What God ſaith ſhall be done, is as good as done already. The *Aſſyrians*, were yet in their Jollity, laughing at *Jeruſalem*, and promiſing themſelves the ſpoyle of the people of God, yet (ſaith the Lord) *Jeruſalem hath laughed thee to ſcorne*; that is, aſſuredly ſhe ſhall, And as the people of God doe ſometimes formally and explicitly laugh at the downfall & witherings of the wicked, ſo they alwayes virtually & ſecretly laugh them to ſcorn,

ſcorn, even when they ſtand and flouriſh in their greeneneſſe and proſperity, For while the Godly are not daunted with the power and ſplendour, while they are not terrified with the threats and high looks of the wicked, but in the ſingleneſſe and ſimplicity of their hearts, keep cloſe to God, his wayes and truths; even this, though they uſe the dueſt reſpect to them in regard of their authority, both in word and geſture, is a laughing them to ſcorne: For this is as a thorne in the ſides of evill men, and as a pricke in their eyes; when they ſee they will not ſtoop to their greatneſſe in any ſinfull complyance with their commands. This is a truth, but the former is the truth intended in this Text.

Hence note:

That wicked men are not only miſerable but ridiculous.

They are the laughter of the innocent, upon more accounts then one.

Firſt, becauſe they do ſuch childliſh and ridiculous things, ſuch things as can never reach the ends they deſire and purpoſe: they are juſtly laughed at, whoſe counſells and courſes are unſuitable, much more, when contrary to their deſignes.

Secondly, Wicked men become ridiculous, while the Lord fruſtrates their wiſeſt counſels, & blaſts thoſe hopes which were bottom'd upon the moſt probable principles and foundations, while he takes them in their own craft, and entraps them in the ſnare which they laid for others.

Thirdly, While he over-rules all that they plot or act to ſerve his own ends, and fulfill his own holy counſels. Hence the enemies of God are ſaid *to pine away; this ſhall be the plague wherewith the Lord will ſmite all the people, that have fought againſt Jeruſalem, their fleſh ſhall conſume away while they ſtand upon their feet* (he doth not ſay, that they ſhall be ſlain, but their fleſh ſhall conſume away while they ſtand upon their feete) *and their eyes ſhall conſume away in their holes, and their tongue ſhall conſume away in their mouth* (Zech. 14. 12.) which as ſome interpret of their bodily languiſhment, that they ſhall live dying continually, or that their life ſhall be a continuall death, ſo all interpret the cauſe of *this conſumption* to ariſe from vexation of ſpirit, becauſe they ſhall ſee themſelves ſcorn'd and laughed at, or that they are become ridiculous to all the world, but chiefly to *Jeruſalem*, the

the Church and people of God, whom they shall behold in good condition, notwithstanding all the opposition which they have made against them; which *Eliphaz* also clearely expresseth in the next words.

Vers. 20. *Whereas our substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumes.*

There are divers readings and rendrings of this verse: first, some with an affirmative interrogation; *is not their substance cut down?* that is, it is cut downe; And then this verse is a continuation of the former discourse concerning the utter extirpation of the wicked; *The righteous are glad, they laugh them to scorn; is not their substance cut down? and doth not the fire consume the remnant of them?* As if *Eliphaz* had said, Whatsoever they had of any substance or moment is cut downe, and if possibly there be any small inconsiderable remainder of them, fire (that is, some devouring Judgement) will meete with it, and make an utter end of it.

Innocens substantiam habebit cum, quia non fuit incisa substantia nostra &c. q. d. ut qui se & res suas salvas, illas aut eam penitus igne illo divino videant juxta adjumptor. Bez.

Secondly, Another understands this 20th verse as a reason of the former, *the righteous are glad* (when the wicked fall) *the innocent shall laugh them to scorne, because our substance was not cut downe*; as if he had said, our safety will be matter as of praise to God who hath preserved us, so of holy scorne and insultation over ungodly men, who longed to see our destruction and said in their hearts, that surely our day was not only coming, but hastning; whereas indeed we see the day come upon them which burneth as an oven, and themselves as stubble. Wicked men are for the most part doubly disappointed; first, by their own fall, when they looked to stand: secondly, by the standing of the righteous when they look, yea, and long for their fall; This double disappointment doth at once double their sorrow, and the joy of the Innocent, who laugh them to scorn, because *their own substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumeth.*

Innocens substantiam habebit ex discessu, cui non est incisa substantia nostra, tamen excellentiam istorum consumpsit ignis. Pisc.

There is a third translation which makes these words the form in which the innocent expres their laughter at the wicked. When *The innocent laugh them to scorn*, they will thus bespeak them: *Whereas* or *Although our substance is not cut down, yet the remnant of them, or the best; the excellency of them the fire hath consumed.*

There is a fourth reading, which makes the second part of the Chapter

Chapter begin with this verse. For hitherto *Eliphaz* hath been describing the sinfulnesse of wicked men, and the wrath of God upon them for their wickednesse. But here he is supposed entring upon a very serious exhortation to repentance, after this manner, or to this effect; *O Job, now while our substance is not quite cut down, and the fire consumeth the residue or the remnant of the wicked, acquaint thy selfe with God*; or apply thy self to God, as if he should say, *before thou art cleane cut down, before thou art utterly ruined as many wicked men have been heretofore, and now are, humble thy selfe and seeke to God, that thy sin may be forgiven, and thy wound healed.* Some paralel this in sense with that of the Preacher, *Eccl.* 12. 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evill dayes come not, nor the yeares draw nigh wherein thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.* Thus *Eliphaz* is conceived exhorting *Job*, *While our substance is not cut down, while we are not totally undone, while the fire of Gods wrath is consuming the remainder of wicked men, doe thou acquaint thy self with God, and repent.* And though our translation makes not this connection, yet it joynes fully in the sense of the Originall.

Cum nondum abscindatur substantia nostra, & residuum illorum absumit ignis, assuesce quæso cum illo. Jun.

Whereas our substance is not cut down.

Quum subsistentia nostra non sit excisa, reliquias autem istorum ignis assumpserit. Tygur.

Ita bene ut nihil melius. Bold.

So this verse is an ellegant conclusion of the whole matter hitherto insisted upon by *Eliphaz*, and he shuts it up in two parts: First, shewing the state of the innocent, who are brought in speaking thus, *Our substance is not cut down*, strictly, That by which we stand or subsist, our substance or subsistence, which some expound not by goods, but by life; we may take it both wayes, our life, and that by which our life is maintained, or by which we and our families subsist, *is not cut down.*

הֲלֹא נִכְחַד קִימָתֵנוּ׃ *ἀφῆξις. extant itaque potius τὸ ἐσηκὸς ἡμῶν quo subsistimus, duramus, vel subsistentia nostra, i. e. vita qua subsistimus, nam stare valet interdum superstitem esse.* Drus.

There is yet a difficulty in regard of the grammaticall sense of these words. For *Eliphaz* having spoken before in the third person plural, *The righteous are glad and the innocent laugh them to scorn*, should (as it may be thought) rather have continued his speech in the same forme, and have said, *Whereas their substance is cut down*, but he puts it in the first person plurall, *Whereas Our substance is not cut down*, &c

We may answer two wayes; First, that it is usuall in Scripture to vary the number, while the same person or persons is or are spoken of; take onely one Instance, *Hos.* 12. 4. *He* (that is the Angel

of

of the Covenant) *found him in Bethel*, that is, *Jacob*. *And there he ſpake with us*. It ſhould according to Grammar be read thus; *And there he ſpake with him*. Having found *Jacob* in *Bethel*, he ſpake with him in *Bethel*. But we ſee both the perſon and number are varied, the former words running in the third perſon ſingular (being meant particularly of *Jacob*,) the latter in the firſt perſon plural, *There he ſpake with us*; The Spirit of God thereby ſignifying, that, what God ſpake at that time to *Jacob* perſonally, he ſpake to all the ſpirituall ſeed of *Jacob*, whether of the Circumciſion or Uncircumciſion, virtually. He ſo ſpake to *Jacob* as that the ſubſtance and effect of his ſpeech reacheth downe to and hath an influence upon *us*, beleevers, who are his poſterity according to the Spirit. Beſides this, other Scriptures hold out the like variation of the number, as in the Text, which is the firſt anſwer.

Secondly, *Eliphaz* might purpoſely vary the number, that himſelfe might put in for a ſhare, and be numbred among thoſe, who had obtained that ſparing mercy, not to be cut downe while others were conſumed. And ſo this reaſon of the change is purely ſpirituall, much like that laſt opened out of *Hoſea*.

Whence note;

That the righteous are often preſerved in common calamities.

(*Pſal.* 20. 8.) *They are brought downe, and are fallen, but we are riſen and ſtand upright, our ſubſtance is not cut downe*; God takes ſpeciall care of his own people; they are under a promiſe; there can be no greater ſafety, no better ſecurity then to be under a promiſe: the promiſe is the beſt ſhelter in a ſtorme, and the beſt ſhield againſt the dart. The Apoſtle *Peter* gives us two famous examples of this, (2*Pet.* 2. 5, 6.) *God ſpared not the old world, but ſaved Noah*, &c. *bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. And having turned the Cities of Sodome and Gomorrah into aſhes, condemned them with an overthrow*, &c. *and delivered juſt Lot*, &c. From both which examples he concludeth (*v.* 9.) *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation, and to reſerve the unjuſt unto the day of Judgement to be puniſhed. When judgement begins at the houſe of God, what ſhall the end of them be that obey not the Goſpel of God?* as the ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Pet.* 4. 17.) It is a ſure argument to the wicked that they ſhall be judged, when they ſee God bringing judgements upon his own houſe

houſe and people; but the wicked are many times judged while the houſe and people of God are preſerved and untoucht; and when both good and bad both the innocent, and the wicked are wrapt up in the ſame calamity, when they are (as it were) thruſt together into the ſame furnace, the Lord makes a difference, they are not cut down as the wicked are cut downe, nor conſumed as they are conſumed When the righteous are caſt into the fire they are purged but not conſumed, but (as it follows in the ſecond part of this concluſion, ſhewing the ſtate of the wicked)

The remnant of them the fire conſumeth.

Fire in this place is not taken ſtrictly, as oppoſed to water, God indeed hath often made fire in kind his ſcourge. And the Apoſtle *Jude* ſaith of *Sodome*, That it ſuffered the vengeance of eternall fire. But all the judgements of God are in Scripture compared to fire (*Mala.* 4. 1.) *Behold the day cometh that ſhall burne like an Oven, and all the proud, yea all that doe wickedly ſhall be ſtubble, and the day that cometh ſhall burne them up, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, that it ſhall leave them neither frute nor branch*. There is a burning, and not by fire; There is ſo great a judgement and terror in fire let looſe and breaking its bounds, that it may well ſignifie all judgements, or any thing that is terrible. (*Iſa.* 52. 4.) *As the fire devoureth the ſtubble, and the fleme conſumeth the chaffe, ſo their root ſhall be rottenneſſe, and their bleſſome ſhall goe up as duſt*, Thus here, *the remnant of them the fire conſumeth*, that is, the wrath of God appearing in ſome viſible judgment conſumeth the remnant.

But what is this *remnant* which the fire conſumeth?

I anſwer. Firſt, we may expound it of perſons. The remnant of perſons, all that are left of their family, their children and poſterity, their kindred and relations are taken away and conſumed from off the face of the earth.

Secondly, We may expound it of things, the remnant of goods, whatſoever remains of their eſtate, the odde ends, the very gleanings and leavings of their great riches and wordly ſubſtance, are all eaten up and brought to an end, ſo that nothing of them or theirs remaineth.

Thirdly, The remnant of them may be *the remembrance* of them. A fire ſhall conſume their name and memoriall, they ſhall neaer be thought of, nor ſpoken of any more with honour.

יתר *significat illud quo quis alium excellit, ideo reliquiarum nomine impiorum excellentē & supra cūctos mortales ingentem fœlicitatem intelligo.* Pined.

Fourthly, The word *remnant*, as it signifieth in the Originall any thing which remaineth, so especially that which remaineth in way of excellency, or eminency; not as we say the sagge end of a thing, but even the uppermost and best of it. So that (after this translation) *the remnant of them* is *the excellency of them*, that which they thought most durable, and honourable, that which they looked upon as most substantiall and intrinsecall to their greatnesse, that very thing *the fire shall consume*. So the word is used (Ps. 17. 14.) *Deliver my soul from men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world*, &c. *whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasures, they are full of children, and leave the rest* (or as we supply, *the rest of their substance*) *to their babes*; the rest, that is, *the best*; their bellyes are full of hid treasures while they live, that is, they have and use abundance of the things of this life themselves; and they *leave the rest*, he doth not mean the scraps or parings after they had filled their own bellies, but *by the rest* or the *remnant*, ('tis the word of the text) he meaneth the choicest of what they had; even that they leave to their babes or children, when themselves must be gone and leave the world. Thus we may understand the word *remnant* in this place, not for a poore pittance, but for the best, the choicest things, for the flower and cream of all they had, even these things *the fire shall consume*, vengeance shall pursue and follow, till all be turned into smoak and ashes.

I have in divers other passages of this booke met with Texts shewing the utter consumption of wicked men, therefore I shall not stay upon it here; onely take this briefe note.

That the Lord hath a different fire for the righteous and the wicked.

He hath a fire for his owne people, but it is *a purging fire, a cleansing, a refining fire*. Like that (*Mal.* 3. 3.) *He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver*. The Lord also hath a fire for the wicked, but it is a consuming fire. He kindles many fires upon them, and himself is a consuming fire to them. But it may be said, that God is a consuming fire also to his owne people; for the Apostle speaking of himselfe and other beleevers, saith (*Heb.* 12. 29.) *Our God is a consuming fire*. I answer; First, Tis true, the God of Beleevers is a consuming fire, but he is not a consuming fire to beleevers; even the hearts of beleevers ought to be overawed

awed with a holy fear of that in God, which they shall never feel from God. Secondly, God is sometimes a consuming fire to beleevers; but it is only to consume their corruptions, or their corruptible comforts: He will never consume either their Graces or spirituall interests. These he will not consume whatsoever he consumes. But the whole of a wicked man is as combustible matter before him. *There went up a smoak out of his nostrills, fire out of his mouth devoured* (Psal. 18. 8.) That is, God powred out wrath, which devoured them like a fire. Fire (I meane naturall fire) is a great devourer, it hath a strong stomacke, there's nothing but pure Gold too hard for its digestion; but mysticall fire, the fire of divine wrath is infinitely a greater devourer. Wrath kindles many devouring fires, but wrath it selfis the most devouring fire; who can stand before it? who can abide the heate and flames of it? This is the *Tophet* prepared of old for the wicked; This fire is able to consume branch and rush, the roote and top of the wicked in one day, and yet it will continue consuming them to eternity. *The remnant of them the fire consumeth.*

Eliphaz having thus farre prosecuted a description both of the unrighteousnesse and of the ruine, both of the sin and punishment of wicked men, closely insinuating that *Job* was the man concern'd in all this large Discourse, he, in the latter part of this Chapter, turnes his speech into a serious Exhortation to move *Job* to repent, and seeke God, giving him many assurances and promises, that (in case he did so) it should not be in vaine.

JOB, CHAP. 22. Vers. 21, 22. &c.

Acquaint now thy selfe with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.

Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.

If thou returne to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity from thy Tabernacles, &c.

ELiphaz having reproved *Job* for sin, and prest him with the remembrance of the Judgements of God against sinners: now turnes his speech into a serious Exhortation moving him to seeke the favour of God, and humble himselfe, *Acquaint now thy selfe with him, and be at peace.* From this course and method in which *Eliphaz* deales with *Job*, take this note.

That in dealing with sinners we are not only to threaten, but to perswade and propose the promises of peace to them.

Daniel dealt so with *Nebuchadnezzar*, yea though he had told him of a decree in heaven past against him (*Dan*:4.22. 27.) yet he gives him faithfull counsell, and exhorts him *to breake off his sins by righteousnesse, and his iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it might be a lengthning of his tranquillity*, or (as we put in the Margin) *a healing of his errour.* Hopes of mercy prevaile with many, more then fear of wrath, and they are sooner led then driven unto Christ. Thus *Eliphaz*; *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace.*

This 21 verse containes two generall Propositions. First, a Proposition concerning duty, in the former part of the vers; *Acquaint now thy selfe*, &c. Secondly, Concerning mercy in the latter, *thereby good shall come unto thee.* This duty of acquainting himself with God, and being at peace with him is explained in the 22. verse. *Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.* That's a good Comment upon, *Acquaint now thy selfe with him, and be at peace.* The Proposition of mercy, or the promises laid down in the close of that verse, are drawne out in all the following part of this Chapter, in which *Eliphaz* by most ample proposalls of good things, doth provoke *Job* to turn from those

Promissionibus invitat amplissimis, quæ & in se veræ sunt & cum lege consentiunt, non tamen perpetua ut Eliphaz putat. Merc.

those sinnes of which he supposed him guilty, and to returne to God.

Acquaint now thy selfe with God.

The Originall word which we render *to acquaint*, hath some variety of significations: As first to be familiar with another. And so it is used by *David* (Psal. 139. 3.) to shew the Intimacie which God hath with all our wayes, works, and thoughts, *O Lord* (saith *David*) *thou hast searched me and knowne me*, &c. *thou art acquainted with all my wayes*; As if he had said; *Lord, thou knowest my wayes infinitely more clearely and distinctly, then any of my neerest acquaintance, who converse with me every day.* It is used 2dly to expresse the customary doing of a thing (*Numb.* 22. 30) *Balaams* Asse spake thus by a miracle, *Was I ever wont to doe thus unto thee?* Hath it been my custom, or have I familiarly served thee thus, said the Asse, when he thrust *Balaam* against the wall.

Thirdly, *To profit*; one of the Rabbins translates the Text thus; *Profit with God*, as who should say, thou hast been an unprofitable servant to God all this while, be thou now profitable unto him, serve him and his Providences, advance his name and glory; or thus rather, Thou hast but played the truant hitherto, be thou now a good proficient in the Schoole of Divine doctrine and discipline under the holy precepts and various providences of God. We find it applyed to that sence at the second verse of this Chapter; *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself?* Man cannot be profitable unto God, or adde any advantage to him by what he doth, but man may be profitable unto himselfe, or doe himself good in doing the good will of God; yea God reckons it and rewards man for it, as if he had bin profitable to him, when he acts as becomes a faithful servant to him. So some expound it here, *be profitable unto God*, be a faithfull and industrious servant unto him: having received his talents, doe not lay them up in a napkin, hide them not in the earth.

שכן *profuit, commodus, aptus fuit. Profice cum deo.* Rab. Mos.

Thirdly, Master *Broughton* reads thus, *Reconcile thee now unto him.* That's Gospel language, like that of *Paul* (2 Cor. 5. 20) *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God*, So he conceives *Eliphaz* speaking here, *I pray thee now reconcile*

Redi cum ipso in gratiam. Bez. *Accommodate illi.* Tygur.

concile thy selfe unto God. Master *Beza* reaches that sence fully, *Returne into his favour*, get into his heart againe; God hath as it were lockt thee out of his heart, and shut the door upon thee, now get in again; and the Tygurine reads very aptly, *Accommodate thy selfe to him*, that is, every way suite thy self to him; thou hast heretofore been humorous, or hast followed thine own spirit, and hast labour'd to please thy selfe, now Accomodate thy self to him, or comply with him in every thing, be no more at thine own but at his dispose. All these rendrings comply well both with the words and the generall scope of *Eliphaz* in this part of his discourse. Our translation fully joynes with the first of them.

Acquaint now thy selfe with him.

Assuesce cum eo. Pagn. Reg. Vatabl.

Get into a familiarity with God. The word implyeth a liknes, or a suitablenesse between two in their wills and affections, in their wayes and counsels; for from likenesse in these familiarity or acquaintance doth arise. So that *Eliphaz* here speaketh to *Job* as one that had estranged himselfe and departed from God, as one who had broken off Communion with God, and so he must needs have done, had he run such a course of wickednesse as *Eliphaz* charged him with, in the former part of this Chapter. Therefore upon that supposition he gives *Job* wholesome advice, *Acquaint now thy selfe with him.*

Hence observe;

First, *That as man by nature is a stranger from God, so every act of sin, especially great and continued actings of sin, breed a further estrangement from God.*

We act the part of nature every time we sin, and that in a proportion brings us back in some degree to what we were by nature, *strangers unto God.* A godly man (who hath had acquaintance with God) sinning puts back his acquaintance, & a distance grows between God and him. Believers after great sins and follyes committed, are not forward to come into the presence of God, they have a kinde of listlesnesse to duty, a listlesnesse to prayer, & to all acts of communion with God. And God himself appears as if he did not much care for them when they come, they have not those Communications from God which he usually vouchsafeth his, God doth not give them the meeting as formerly; they doe not finde

finde the Lord presently, though they seek him earnestly. So that both wayes there is an Estrangement; sin separates between God and the soule, not onely judicially but naturally. If God should not depart from sinners, or command them to depart from him, yet they would of themselves depart from him. It is not possible for one, who willingly lives in sin, to live willingly in the presence of God: For as to be cast out of the presence of God, is the extreamest punishment of wicked men, so also is their being in his presence. The same thing is both their desire & their punishment. They are punished with a departure from God; and they desire nothing more then to be out of his presence.

Acquaint thy selfe now with God.

Secondly, Whereas *Eliphaz* exhorting *Job* to repentance, counsells him to acquaint himselfe with God.

Observe;

That Repentance is the renewing of our Communion or acquaintance with God.

As sin is a turning from God, so repentance is a returning to God; 'tis a change first of our minde, and then of our way. Impænitency brings the soul into an acquaintance and unholy familiarity with Satan; Repentance brings back the soul into its former acquaintance, and holy familiarity with God. As the first conversion (which is from a state of sin) so the second and every renewed conversion (which is from our falls into sin) renewes our converse with the most high.

Thirdly, take this generall observation;

A godly man is (as we may say) one of Gods Acquaintanss or familiars.

God calleth *Abraham* his friend; friendship cannot be without familiarity, there must be acquaintance before there can be love, if therefore there be friendship and love between God and man, there must be Acquaintance; we cannot love either persons or things, while unknown.

But it may be said, how can we, who are at such a distance, Acquaint our selves with God?

I answer, we (who of our selves are a farre off) are made nigh by

by the bloud of Jeſus Chriſt, and being thus made nigh in our ſtate, we draw nigh or acquaint our ſelves with him by ſeverall Acts. As firſt, To thinke or meditate of God, is to acquaint our ſelves with and draw nigh to God; meditation is an inward diſcourſe and converſe with God, it is a Soliloquie between God and the ſoule; acquaintance is got by Conference: when friends meet and confer, that doth not onely begin, but confirme, ſtrengthen, and heighten their acquaintance. Saints have many thoughts of God, and that's their acquaintance with God. *How precious are thy thoughts to me, O God!* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 139. 17.) *how great is the ſumme of them! when I awake I am ſtill with thee.* How was *David* ſtil or ever with God? He was ſo in his thoughts, and meditations, in the actings & goings forth of his ſoul to him. Now he that is ſtill or ever with a perſon, muſt needs be acquainted with him, *I am ſtill with thee*, alwayes meditating upon thee. We finde him againe in the ſame holy frame (*Pſal.* 63. 5, 6.) *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſſe, & my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips; while I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* As the Lord is ever thinking upon his people, they are written upon his heart, and graven upon the palms of his hand, and when his outward actings towards them are ſuch, as may ſeeme to intimate that his heart is withdrawn from all intimacy with them, yet even then he thinks moſt of them. This he acknowledgeth concerning *Ephraim* (Ier. 31. 20.) *Since I ſpake againſt him I doe earneſtly remember him ſtill.* Since I ſpake againſt him, that is, ſince I ſpake againſt him by words of rebuke and correction, ſince I ſpake againſt him by rods of chaſtiſement and correction, (as *Ephraim* found and confeſſed he had; *Thou didſt chaſtiſe me, and I was chaſtiſed*) ſince I ſpake thus againſt him. *I do earneſtly remember him ſtill.* I remember him & I remember him ſtrongly, my heart is much upon him. And when the Lord ſaith thus, we are not to underſtand it as a man will remember an Enemy, when he ſpeaks againſt him; hee'l remember him indeed, and that earneſtly to plot miſchief againſt him, and to execute his revenge; but the meaning is, I remember him in mercy, my affections goe out to him, my bowels are moved towards him. Such is the remembrance which God had of *Ephraim*, even when he was ſpeaking againſt him & ſmiting him. Now as the Lord doth remember his people at all times, and earneſtly

neſtly remember them at ſometimes. So his people in their proportion doe earneſtly remember the Lord, they minde him often, they would minde him alwayes, they like to retaine God (which the natural man liketh not, *Rom.* 1. 28.) in their knowledge, or to acknowledge God; They have not ſome flitting tranſient thoughts and acknowledgements of God (as a carnall man may have) but they fix and retaine God in their thoughts & acknowledgements, they think of God, what he is in his nature, they think what God is in all his perfections, they meditate of all his glory, of his juſtice, of his mercy, of his faithfulneſs, of his power, of his truth, of his unchangeableneſs, of his all ſufficiency, they acquaint themſelves with God in all theſe; for indeed we are never acquainted with God, till we come to a diſtinct knowledge of him in all theſe parts of his glory, which yet are all but one and the ſame glorious God. To know only in generall that there is a God, is not to acquaint our ſelves with God; our acquaintance with him conſiſts in a ſpirituall and fiduciall knowledge of all his revealed perfections, ſo farre as it is poſſible or lawfull for man to ſearch and know. To be acquainted with any man, notes more than a generall knowledge of him, how much more to be acquainted with God.

Secondly, We acquaint our ſelves with God, not only when we ſtudy his nature, or what he is, but when we ſtudy his works, or what he hath done, God is viſible in his works. *That his name is near, his wondrous works declare* (Pſ. 75. 1.) We may acquaint our ſelves much with God in the works of Creation, but more in the works of Providence, in thoſe we may moſt legibly read his name, that is, his greatneſs and power, as alſo his goodneſs and mercy.

Thirdly, We acquaint our ſelves with God in the ſtudy of his word; there he hath made a full diſcovery of himſelfe and of his will; *O how I love thy Law* (ſaith *David*) *my meditation is in it night and day.* The word of God is the demonſtration of the holineſs of God: There he hath ſet forth himſelfe, how juſt, how pure, and how gracious he is. The word is a glaſs in which God is ſeene, therefore acquaint thy ſelfe with the word of God, and thou ſhalt be acquainted with God; reading and hearing the word of God is our going to God, for Counſell, as we acquaint our ſelves with a man when we goe to him, and aske his advice and counſell in any matter, or conſult his books; ſo every time we ei-

ther read or heare the word of God in faith, we are asking counſell of God, and ſo acquainting our ſelves with him.

Fourthly, We eſpecially, acquaint our ſelves with God in prayer. That is nothing elſe but the opening of our hearts to God, a declaring of our wants to him, *Prayer is the aſcending, the lifting up of the ſoul to God*, therefore in prayer we acquaint our ſelves with God.

Fifthly, Our daily holy walking, is a daily acquainting our ſelves with God, every ſtep of a holy life is both towards and with God the life of *Enoch* (who was too holy for a life here on earth, and therefore he *was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death*, his life I ſay) is deſcribed thus, *Enoch walked with God* (Gen. 5.24.) God and *Enoch* were like two familiars or intimate friends walking together; And becauſe he tooke ſo much delight in Gods acquaintance, God took him from all acquaintance with men; ſo ſaith that text; *Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him.* He was ſo taken with God, that God took him, or as the Author to the *Hebrews* ſaith, *tranſlated him* (ch. 11 5.) He was before tranſlated from nature to Grace & he proved ſo great a proficient in that ſchool, that he was tranſlated from Grace to Glory (as it were *per ſaltum.*) by a leap over the grave; for he ſaw not death; From which ſad viſion, but one more (that I read of in all the Scripture, *Elias* by name) was excuſed before he was admitted to the beatificall viſion *Holy walking is the ſum of all our acquaintance with God; and our fulleſt acquaintance with God is but the iſſue of our holy walkings.*

To draw towards a cloſe of this poynt; we may take notice, That there is a twofold acquaintance with God Firſt, from neceſſity, when we come to him and deſire to have to doe with him, preſt with our own wants, feares, or afflictions; of this the Prophet ſpeaketh (*Iſa.* 26. 16) *Lord in trouble have they viſited thee, they have powred out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them.* And of this the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks (*Pſ.* 78. 34.) *When he ſlew them they ſought him, and they returned and enquired early after God: nevertheleſſe, they did but flatter him with their mouth*, &c. Theſe make God their refuge not their choice; They, I grant, who have made God their choice in good times may comfortably make him their refuge in evill times. But to neglect God while it is well with us, and onely to run to him when it is ill with us, or to have our evills

evills and burdens removed, is to acquaint our ſelves with God, becauſe we cannot chooſe, or becauſe we cannot be without him, not becauſe we have choſen him, or deſire to be with him. As there is a patience, ſo there is an acquaintance perforce. Though God doth not refuſe acquaintance with many poore ſoules, when their neceſſities drive them to him, yet it is beſt to acquaint our ſelves with him for the love we bear to him, or the deſire we have to enjoy him rather then (though we all have need of him, and are bound to come to him becauſe we have) for the need we have of him. And therefore, ſecondly, there is an acquaintance with God from pure love. As when we come to a friend, having nothing to do but to ſee him, and to renew or ſtrengthen our acquaintance with him. We do not come to load him with our cares, or adviſe with him about our buſineſſes or deſire a curteſie of him, but, meerly & purely to ſhew our love to him. Thus to come to God when we are not preſt with feares, nor pincht with wants, nor clouded with doubts, nor vexed with troubles, is the moſt noble & ingenuous way of acquainting our ſelves with him. When we (as it were) make a Journey to God, having nothing to do with him, but to viſit him & to deſire further communion with him, nothing to do with him but to behold his excellency & his glory, nothing to do with him, but to tell him what our hearts are towards him, how we love him, how we depend upon him, how we deſire to pleaſe him, and to commit our ways to him, to acquaint God with thoſe things wch only concern our holy walking with him, this is to ſeek pure acquaintance with him. The Lord ſaith of *Abraham* his acquaintant or friend (*Gen.* 18. 17.) *Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I am to doe?* I ſhould not deale with him as with my friend, if I did ſo. A friend who is as our own ſoul (*Deut.* 13.6.) ſhould know all that is in our ſouls. Now as God (whether we will or no) is acquainted with all that is in our ſouls; So a ſoul acquainted with God, will let him know all; ſhall I hide from God the thing that I am about to doe? ſhall I not tell him how it is with me? To acquaint our ſelves thus with God is a ſweete and precious duty. Much might be ſaid about it; I ſhall onely adde theſe two things; Firſt, That all our acquaintance with God muſt be had through the mediator; There is no getting neer the Father but by the Son. Secondly, That the more we are acquainted with God, the more we are transformed into his likeneſſe. Some

have altered the habit of their bodies, yea the diſpoſitions of their minds by long acquaintance with others, and have looked or appeared like them, by often looking upon or being with them. When *Moſes* had been forty dayes in the Mount talking with God, his face ſhone, ſome rayes of a divine glory darted out from him, ſo that *Aaron and the children of Iſrael were afraid to come nigh him* (Exod. 34. 30.) And thus every one who gets up into the Mount by faith, and acquaints himſelfe with God, gets ſomewhat of God, which will draw a reverence upon him among men. As when Chriſt ſhall appeare hereafter to us in glory, *we ſhall be like him* (ſaith the Apoſtle *John* 1 Ep: 3 2.) for we ſhall ſee him as he is; ſo according to the ſight which we have of and our acquaintance with Chriſt in the wayes of grace here, will our likeneſs be unto him. *The more we are with God, the more we have of God. Acquaint now thy ſelfe with him,*

and be at peace.

There is a threefold Interpretation of this clauſe.

Imperativum pro futuro paſſim in hebraismo. Mercer. Quando Hebraei dicunt pax tibi ſignificant id quod Graeci tribus verbis enunciant χαίρειν, ὑγιαίνειν & εὐαγγελίσειν *quorum primum ad animum refertur, ſecundum ad corpus, tertium ad actiones externas.* Druſ.

First, it may be taken as an Effect of what was ſaid before, *Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and be at peace*, that is, *If thou acquaint thy ſelfe with God, thou ſhalt have peace.* So in the Hebrew often the Imperative mood is put for the future tenſe, as, *Doe this, and live*, (according to the tenure of the Covenant of works) that is, *Doe this, and thou ſhalt live*, So *acquaint thy ſelf with him. and be at peace*, that is, thou ſhalt have peace. Peace comprehends all good; good of the minde, good of the body, good of the eſtate. When the Hebrewes ſay, *Peace be unto you*, they ſay as much in that one word, as the Greeks ſay in three; whereof the firſt reſpects the welfare of the mind; the ſecond, the welfare or health of the body; and the third the ſucceſſe of all our affairs and undertakings. So that while *Eliphaz* ſaith to *Job* according to this reading, *Thou ſhalt be at peace*, it is a promiſe of al manner of good flowing in upon the renewing of his acquaintance with, & his returning to a reverentiall converſe with God. But becauſe this promiſe followes in the next words, *thereby good ſhall come unto thee*, therefore I underſtand this clauſe as a duty, and not as a promiſe. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace.* To be *at peace* is a diſtinct duty from that of acquainting our ſelves with God, yet neceſſarily following upon it; The words may have theſe two things in them.

First,

First, *Be at peace*, that is, be quiet and content under the chaſtening hand of God, doe not murmurre, doe not repine. Thou haſt ſtrugled enough already, now lay aſide all impatiency & paſſion, all diſcontents and animoſities, as doe not rage and rave, doe not diſtemper and diſcompoſe thy ſelfe as thou haſt done; There is a ſtorme upon thee, but be thou of a calm and quiet ſpirit, kiſſe the rod, be not angry with it; we may expreſſe this frame by that which the Apoſtle *Peter* makes the chief adorning, or ornament of a woman, that ſhe be of *a meek and a quiet ſpirit, which with God is of great price*; As meekneſſe is a Jewell of the greateſt price that women can weare; ſo it is a moſt rich and precious Jewel for a man to wear; and as at all times, ſo then eſpecially meekneſs and peaceableneſs of ſpirit becomes man, when God ſeems to come in anger and to be at warre with him. *Bildad* ſaid of *Job* (*Chap.* 18. *v.* 4.) *He teareth himſelf in his anger*; As if he had ſaid, the man's mad or diſtracted: now *Eliphaz* adviſeth him, Be at peace, be quiet; This is a good interpretation, and we may note from it,

Sedatiore animo ſto. Bez: Acquieſce in castigationibus dei iustre vgrâſſa; facis ſpretui relationes, ergo mitesce.

That it is our Duty to ſit down quiet and ſatisfied under the ſaddeſt diſpenſations of God.

A ſubmitting ſpirit under an afflicting hand, how comely is it! To be at peace in our ſelves, when all is unquiet about us, how bleſſed a ſight is it! there are ſome who trouble themſelves a great deale more than all the troubles that are upon them can. Man is naturally a very unquiet creature, *an angry piece of fleſh*, when God is angry, he is apt to ſtorm: *till his heart is ſubdued to God, he cannot beare the hand of God.* Wicked men naturally (as the Prophet *Eſay* found them, Chap. 51. 20) *are like a wild bull in a net, full of the fury of God*; and not onely ſo, but full of fury againſt God, throwing up the duſt, and moyling themſelves when the net of God hath caught them, or when God hath caught them in his net. God catcheth his own people in his net many times as well as the wicked. His own people are like a dove in a net, but the wicked are like a wild Bull in a net. I grant, the Doves will flutter a while when the net hath caught them. Impatiency doth often break out in the beſt of Saints: it is a hard thing to keep the heart quiet within while our eſtate is unquiet without. & to be at peace in our ſelves, when God ſeems to be at warre with us. It is hard for us to hold our peace, much more to be at peace in an afflicted

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condition; yet this leſſon, though very hard, Saints have learned. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 39. 9.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.* His was not a ſullen ſilence, but a patient ſilence. He had not a word to ſay againſt God, when God ſpake hard words againſt him, yea, when God was at blowes at ſharps with him. *Paul* alſo had learned in every eſtate to be content (*Phil.*4.11.) however the world went with him, *he was at peace.*

Cum eo pacem habe, ingratiâ redi qui nunc alienatus es, & quasi hoſtis.

Secondly, *Be at peace*, may refer unto God, and ſo it it is but the heightning of our acquaintance with him; for, firſt there muſt be an acquainting, and then a making up of peace, when friends fall out, they muſt firſt ſpeak with one another, before the breach can be healed, if they do not treat, there can be no reconciliation. After treating comes peace; As peace is *the fruit of the lips* (Iſa. 57. 19.) when God treats with man by man, ſo when man treats with man, and when man treats with God. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him*, call for a treaty, and therein make thy peace, *Be at peace with him*, do not any longer continue thy unholy warre with God. *Eliphaz* ſuppoſing *Job* as a man ſetting himſelfe againſt God, had reaſon to beſpeake him thus.

Hence note.

That till we doe acquaint our ſelves with God, we can have no peace with him.

The wicked are like the troubled Sea, whoſe waves caſt up mire and dirt; there is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God (*Iſa.*57. 21.) why no peace to the wicked? the wicked have no acquaintance with God, they are ſtrangers, they are afarre off from God, and God beholds them afarre off, therefore there is no peace to them: if they have any peace, it is a falſe peace, a deceitfull peace, or it is but a ſhort peace, which will quickly break out into a war againe when once Conſcience is awakened, when that ſleeping Lyon is rouzed, what will become of all their peace? they will then find, indeed, that their ſoul is among Lions; and that they have been only ſecure, not ſafe, or that theirs hath been at beſt a truce onely, not a peace; no peace till acquainted God, and no acquaintance with God can produce peace, but that which is by Jeſus Chriſt, He is the Peace-maker, who is alſo the Mediatour; ſinners cannot have peace by any immediate acquaintance with God, for he is a conſuming fire, and ſinners ſtanding alone are but as dry ſtubble before him. When we are made nigh to

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or acquainted with God by the blood of Jeſus Chriſt (and not till then) are we at peace with him. *Acquaint thy ſelfe with him, and be at peace:* no peace without acquaintance with God, no acquaintance with God but by Chriſt, therefore no peace but by Chriſt.

Secondly, Obſerve;

That God is ready to give peace to or to be at peace with thoſe that acquaint themſelves with him.

Acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at peace; as if he ſhould ſay, thou ſhalt certainly be at peace with him, if thou doeſt but acquaint thy ſelfe with him; for the Lord will not *always chide*; his love is everlaſting, but his anger towards his continues but for a moment; As the wiſdome of God in man, ſo much more the moſt wiſe God, is *Gentle, and eaſie to be entreated. The Lord is found of thoſe who ſeek him not* (Iſa. 65. 1.) Surely then he will be found of thoſe that ſeek him; he is not implacable, no nor inexorable. The Lord hath declared himſelfe full of Compaſſion to returning ſinners, ſo full of compaſſion that he ſeeks the acquaintance of ſinners, and beſeeches them to be reconciled to him, much more will he be acquainted with them who beſeech him that they may be reconciled to him. *Fury is not in me* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.*27.4,5.) *who would ſet the bryars and thorns in battel againſt me?* that is, who would be ſo fooliſh as to encourage ſinfull men to be ſo fool-hardy as to ſtand out againſt me, or contend with me, for alas, (as it follows in the text) *I would go through them, I would burn them together.* There's no dealing with me upon thoſe terms; but I will tell you upon what terms a ſinner may deale with me; *Let him lay hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me*, that is, he ſhall not looſe his labour, he ſhall find peace, if he take hold of my ſtrength. One would think he ſhould rather have ſaid, let him take hold of my mercy and goodneſſe, but he ſaith, *Let him take hold of my ſtrength.* To oppoſe the ſtrength of God is moſt dangerous, but by faith to take hold of it, that's both the duty and the priviledge of an humbled ſinner. Proud ſinners oppoſe the ſtrength of God, humbled ſinners take hold of it, as their ſtrength. As a man ſeeing another whom he hath offended, but is unable to reſiſt, or make his party good with him, with much ſubmiſſion takes hold of his

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arme or weapon, endeavouring by earneſt ſuit to ſtay him from ſmiting. And indeed to take hold of the ſtrength of God, is to take hold on his mercy; The ſtrength of God to ſave ſinners lyes in his mercy, and that mercy is in his Son, who is his ſtrength to ſave ſinners; if a ſinner lay hold of this ſtrength, the mercy of God in his Son, *that he may make peace* with God, if this be his deſign *he ſhall make peace*, there ſhall not be a treaty with God in Chriſt for peace in vain; if a ſinner ſhould take hold of the ſtrength of his own righteouſneſs & performances, if he ſhould take hold of the ſtrength of all the Angels in heaven, he could not make peace with God, nor would God agree with him upon thoſe termes Such a ſoul muſt returne (*re infecta*) without his errand God is ready to be at peace with us, but we muſt have our peace in his way, not in our own. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace.* And this peace, whether in our ſelves or with God, is no light or unprofitable thing, as *Eliphaz* to provoke *Job* to purſue and ſeek after it, tells him in the laſt words of this verſe.

Thereby good ſhall come unto thee.

Thereby; whereby? or by what? what is it that ſhall procure, or produce this good? The anſwer is at hand. Thy acquaintance with God, thy being at peace will procure all good things for thee. *Acquaint thy ſelf with him and be at peace:* be at peace in thy own ſpirit, be quiet; be at peace with God, be reconciled, every way *good ſhall come unto thee*, Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Proſperity ſhal come unto thee*, the ſence is the ſame. Others read, in ſtead of *good ſhall come unto thee, thy comings in ſhall be good*: thou ſhalt have a good revenue, a good income: whereas before evill came upon thee, now thy comings in ſhall be good. This alſo is of the ſame meaning with our tranſlation. I ſhall not need to ſtay upon the opening of the words, there is no difficulty in them.

Proventus tuus erit bonus. Druſ.

From their dependance, in that he ſaith, *Acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at peace, ſo ſhall good come unto thee*, Theſe words are brought in by way of inference upon the former, whence

Obſerve.

That when we are eſtranged from God, good is eſtranged from us.

God can ſtop the Influences of all our mercies from us, he can lay an embargo upon all Creatures from bringing any good to us, tho there

there be ſtore of treaſure and rich Commodity in the place, yet he can barre up all, that no good can come unto us; yea, the Lord in ſuch caſes doth often lay a ſtop upon the ſpirit of prayer in his own people, and when the heart is ſtopt that we cannot pray, then uſually good is ſtopt and kept back from coming to us; Prayer is that which fetches in mercy and good things through the love of God in Jeſus Chriſt. Prayer may have a twofold ſtop. Firſt, prayer may have a ſtop in the heart; ſecondly, Prayer which comes forth of the heart may have a ſtop in heaven, the Lord doth even ſhut out prayer ſometimes, and when prayer is ſhut out, no good can get out to us. Prayer is ſent upon a meſſage to heaven, and if our meſſenger be ſhut out of doors and not admitted in, what anſwer can we expect by his meſſage. And the Lord as he doth ſtop ſuch from the receiving of further good, ſo from receiving of good by what they have already. We may have that which in the nature of it is good, and yet have no good by it; God can ſtop the creature in our hands, that it ſhall not at all give us any Comfort, as well as he can ſtop any creature-comfort from coming into our hands. Unleſſe the Lord (in one ſence) ſtop the creature, it quickly leaks out all the Comfort which he hath put into it, and proves to us indeed, what ſin hath made it, *a broken Ciſtern*: And unleſſe the Lord open the creature, the creature cannot give forth that good which it hath; It will be to us as a Ciſtern without a vent to paſſe out the water for our uſe. There's many a one who hath enough in his hand (take it any kind) but he enjoyes nothing of it, becauſe the Lord locks up the conduit, or the ciſterne, and then how much good ſoever there is in it, there's none for him. It is all one to us, whether we have onely a broken Ciſterne for our portion, or a Ciſterne alwayes lockt up; for as the one lets all the water run out, ſo the other holds all the water in; we are as farre from good, if our Ciſterne hold all, as if it held nothing at all. It is then not only our duty and our holineſſe to acquaint our ſelves and be at peace with God, but our wiſdome and our intereſt; For it is as he pleaſeth, alwayes, and uſually as we pleaſe him, that either we have any thing that is good coming to us, or that any good cometh to us by that which we have.

Secondly, Note (which is a Corallary from the former obſervation,

That the renewing of our Communion with God, and making peace with him, is followed with all manner of mercies and good things.

So shall good come unto thee. There was never any man a looser by acquaintance with God: Gods acquaintance is a gainfull acquaintance: Our acquaintance with God, should we consider it, abstractly and separate from all benefit but his very acquaintance yet that is benefit enough; God is the chiefest Good, & therefore when we enjoy him, we enjoy all Good. The enjoyment of God himselfe is infinitely more then the enjoyment of all created good things that come from God. Friends are sometimes in those heights of friendship and nobleness of spirit one to another, that they count the enjoyment of one another to be more then all the benefits they can heape upon or reap by one another; it is your good Company, saith such a friend, and your acquaintance that delights me more then all the good you can bestow upon me. And is not God much more so to us? Thus (I say) acqaintance with God alone is all good; but besides (as the poynt leads us to consider) God gives out good things from himself, to all his holy acquaintants, temporall or bodily good comes to us by his acquaintance, and so also (and that chiefly) doth spirituall or soul good. Acquaint thy selfe with God, and the dewes of grace, showers of the Spirit shall fall into thy bosome. Acquaint thy self with God, and spirituall Comfort shall flow in unto thee, spiritual strength shall flow in unto thee, thy soule shall be filled as with marrow and fatnes. And as good shall come to thee in person, so to thine; to thy family and posterity good shall come. And as God will cause good to come to such, so to stay and abide with them. As good comes, so good continues according to the command and commission which it hath from God. Thus he promised in the Prophet (*Isa.* 48. 18.) in case his people had harkned to his commandements; *Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy posterity as the waves of the Sea.* Thy peace and prosperity had not been as a Land flood or Brooks of water which faile in summer when we have most need of them, (all worldly things are apt to doe so) but they should have flowed perpetually as a river doth, which is fed by a constant Spring, or as the Sea doth which is the feeder of all Springs. A godly man gets not onely a large portion of good things, but a lasting portion, yea a portion

tion of those good things which are everlasting, by acquainting himselfe with God. And because by acquaintance with God so much good comes to us. Therefore *Eliphaz* presseth *Job* further to it in the next verse.

Vers. 22. *Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.*

Receive, that is, learne from his mouth; he that teaches gives, and he that learnes receives; and the Hebrew word which we rendrender here to *Receive*, signifies not ordinary receiving, but receiving with an earnest desire; yea, it implyeth a kind of violence in desire, such as they have who take spoyles in warre. They fly upon the spoyle, and catch it with as much eagernesse as they wonne it with courage. So *Receive the Law from his mouth. David* saith, *I have rejoyced in thy word, more then they that finde great spoyles,* (*Psal.* 119. 162.) O how strongly did his heart run out to the word? and there is an Elegancy also in it, that this word which signifies to receive the Law, doth also signifie the Law or doctrin to be received (*Prov.* 4. 2.) *I give you good doctrine, forsake you not my Law.* The word which is there used for doctrine is the same that is here rendred *to receive*, the reason is, because wholsome doctrine is worthy to be received, and ought to be received willingly, chearfully and gladly, and therefore the Gospel which is the highest and most precious doctrin is called an Acceptable doctrine: *This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all Acceptation* (1 *Tim.* 1. 11.) The Gospel is worthy not onely of Acceptation, or of great, but of all Acceptation, and that from all men, even from the Greatest; And so also is the Law, for, as shall be opened further afterwards, the Law in this place comprehends the Gospel also. *Receive the Law at his mouth.*

Dat Magister quando docet, capit discipulus quando discit. Drus.

לקח *verbum hoc ad prædam quæ cum violentia solitur referri potest.*

Ex hac radice dicitur doctrina. לקח *quasi accepta vel accipienda, quia scilex debet accipi grato & lubenti animo.*

Further, The word which we expresse *Receive*, is rendred by some to *buy*; we may connect both sences here. Receive the Law as a thing bought and carry it home with thee. That of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 23. 23.) suites it well; *Buy the truth, and sell it not*; Truth is a Commodity the trade whereof goes but one way; all Civill Trades and Merchandizes are continued by buying and selling, but this spirituall trade is continued by buying only, without selling, it will be our profit to have this Commodity alwayes upon our hands, or rather alwayes in our hands. Thus here, *Receive the*

the Law at a price, buy it, and keepe it; not that the Lord doth expect any price from us, or that we can bring any thing to him valuable for it. We buy it, when we take paines for it, when we doe our utmost endeavour to receive the truth, when we receive the truth, not onely as it is offered and brought home to us, but when we goe out for it, and seeke after it in all the meanes which God hath appointed as conveyances of it, that's buying the Law of truth.

Receive the Law.

תורה a radice חור ex, foravit aut circumspexit; quia lustrare, quia lex universa est diligenter observanda, ne quis in uno offendat.

Again, We may profitably consider a double derivation of that word which we translate, *Lan*. Some say it is from a roote that signifies *to behold or Contemplate, to Consider, to looke about*; and the Law is well expreſt by a word of that sence, because the whole Law is diligently to be observed and considered, looked into, and meditated upon, we are alwayes to behold it, and that in every part. For the whole Law is copulative, and he that offends in one part offends in all. *David* speaking of the righteous man, (*Psal.* 1. 2.) saith, *he meditates in the law of the Lord day and night*. What's meditation? but the Inward view of a thing, or the beholding it with an Intellectuall eye; meditation is the continuall turning of things over in the minde, to behold the excellencies and perfections that are in them.

A radice ירה quod est pluere irrigare; quare commune & fere idem est nomen, pluviæ Doctoris & legislatoris.

Secondly, Say others, it proceeds from another radicall word, that signifies *to rain*, and that not only some small drisling dewing raine, but full showers, or as we say to powre downe; and in the Hebrew, the same word signifies, *to rain, and to teach*, because teaching by the word is like raining, or the sending downe of raine. The Apostle (*Heb.* 6, 7.) alludes to it. *For the earth which drinketh in the raine that cometh oft upon it.* &c. by the earth he meanes those, who heare the word or doctrine, which comes down upon them like rain to soften their hearts, and make them fruitfull. There are two other Texts of Scripture very suitable to this Exposition (*Esay* 30. 20.) *Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into Corners any more, but thine eye shall see thy teachers. Thy teachers shall not be removed*, so we render: but strictly from the letter of the Hebrew we may read it thus: *Though the Lord give thee the bread of adversitie*, &c. *yet shall not thy raine be*

Non elongabit amplius doctorem.

removed from thee. It may seeme strange that they should have the bread of adversity, and the water of Affliction, and yet have also raine, which naturally causeth the earth to bring forth bread, and fills the pooles with water. But the Prophet who speakes of corporall bread and water in the former part of the verse, speaks of spirituall raine in the latter, making this so full a compensation to the people of God, for the want of other two, that they should have no cause to complain of it. As if the Prophet had said, *Though you are cut short in outward things, yet you shall not be shortned in spiritualls, the rain of holy doctrine shall not be removed from you*, or as we translate, *thy teachers shall not be removed*, &c. Some amongst us would have the teachers of holy doctrine removed, least by feeding them the bread & water of the Land should fayle, as if the charge of publick preaching the riches of the Grace of Christ would be an undoing, or at least an impoverishing of the Nation. Whereas (I touch it only by the way) the Prophet comforts the people of God in the midst of all their wants & outward afflictions, that they should not want the presence of their teachers, nor the showers of holy instruction by them. Again (*Joel* 2. 23.) *Be glad O Zion, and rejoyce in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former raine moderately, and he will cause to come down the rain; the former raine and the latter raine in the first month*. That which we render, (*The former rain moderately*) others translate, *a Teacher of righteousnesse*, or *according to righteousnesse*; so you may finde in the Margin of your larger Bibles. And that's the great mercy which *Zion* is to rejoyce in; for can we thinke that *Zion*, the children of *Zion* should be called so earnestly to rejoyce meerly in natural raine, or the effects of it; because of the abundance of Corne and Wine and Oyle, which the earth well watered usually produceth? This is too poor a thing (considered alone) for *Zion* to rejoyce in! *Zion* or the people of God doe and must confesse themselves unworthy of the least outward mercy, even of a shower of raine, or of a sheafe of corn, and they ought to praise God, and be very thankfull for these; But these are not properly, the matter of *Zions* gladnesse and rejoycing. In these the world rejoyceth, *Who will shew us any good*. (*Psal.* 4. 7.) they are for Corne, and Wine, and Oyle, but *Lord* (saith *David*) *lift up the light of thy Countenance upon me, Thou hast put gladnesse in mine heart, more then in the time that their corn and*

Sanctè colluditur prophetæ nominibus doctoris seu legislatoris & pluviæ, seu imbris matutini & serotini.

and their wine encreased: As if he had said, Worldly men rejoyce in corne and wine; but I rejoyce more in the light of thy countenance. The light of the favour of God, and the light of the knowledge of God, are the chiefe matters of a beleevers joy. And this light of holy joy comes in usually with and by the raine of that doctrin, which falls upon us from the mouth of God in the teachings of his divine Law. *Receive the Law from his mouth.*

But you will say, What is this Law which comes downe like raine from heaven? and which we are to receive from the mouth of God.

I answer; The Law may be taken two wayes.

First, Strictly for the ten Commandements, or the five Bookes of *Moses*, which are called the Law.

Secondly, More largely, and so the whole word of God is the Law. Christ himselfe calls the Booke of *Psalmes* the Law two or three times in the new Testament (*Joh.* 10. 34.) *Jesus answered them, is it not written in your Law, I have said ye are Gods?* where was that written? in the 82d *Psal.* v. 6. And so againe, (*Joh.* 15. 25.) *But this cometh to passe, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, they hated me without a cause.* What Law doth he mean? those words we finde (*Psal.* 35. 19.) Take one text further? (1 *Cor.* 14. 21.) *In the Law it is written, With men of other tongues, and other lips will I speak unto this People.* Where is that written? (*Esay* 28. 11.) So that the *Law* in a large sense, is taken for the whole body of the word of God, or for the generall Revelation of the mysterie of his will, in which sense we may say the Gospel is the Law: And the Gospel is expressely called the *Law* (or rule) *of faith* (Rom. 3 27.) So that by *Law* here we may understand whatsoever the Lord hath given us, either as a rule of life, or as a rule of faith. The Seaventy translate *Eliphaz* speaking in that latitude, *Receive whatsoever God delivers, declares, or puts forth. Receive, I pray thee, the Law*

ἐξηγορίαν.

from his mouth.

From whose mouth? from the mouth of God; how can that be? Indeed *Moses* went up into the Mount, and was with God fourty dayes, and there received the Law from his mouth; but could *Job* Receive the Law from his mouth as *Moses* did? I answer; If God had called him to it, as he did *Moses* he might. But that's

that's not the purpose of *Eliphaz*. Neither are we (I conceive) to understand him of such a *Receiving from the mouth of God*, as the old Prophets had who received the minde of God by Immediate Inspiration, & dictates from God himself: for though they were not called up solemnly into a Mount (as *Moses*) to receive the Law, yet the Spirit was sent to make knowne the minde of God to them. And in that sence the Prophet *Jeremiah* is said to warne King *Zedekiah from the mouth of the Lord* (2 Chron. 36. 12.) *And he did that which was evill in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himselfe before Jeremiah the Prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord*; that is, he received a word from God by an Extraordinary Revelation to carry unto the King, who yet humbled not himselfe. And so (*Esay* 30. 2.) the Lord complaines of his people *that walked to goe down to Egypt to strengthen themselves with the strength of Pharoah*, &c. *and yet had not asked at his mouth*, that is, had not asked direction in the thing according to the wayes of Revelation then in use, by enquiring of the Prophets, or of the high Priest; And the Lord tels the Prophet *Jeremy* (Ch. 15. 19) *that he should be as his mouth if he would take forth the precious from the vile*, as if he had said, if thou art faithfull in my work, I will reveale my selfe to thee, & thou shalt speak even as I my selfe spoke, thou shalt be as my mouth. Now, I conceive, *Eliphaz* doth not goe thus high when he bids *Job Receive the Law from the mouth of God*, as if he were to expect Immediate direction and advice from him. For then, we may be said to receive a rule or a law from the mouth of God, when we receive that which God hath manifested at any time as a rule and law for us with the rest of his people to walke by: they who receive that law once delivered from the mouth of God, may be said to receive the law from his mouth, though they are not the Immediate receivers of it, yea, though it were published some thousands of yeares before they were borne. Some from these words, collect that the books of *Moses* were written before this time, and that *Eliphaz* did referre *Job* to those, bidding him receive that law which the mouth of God had spoken to *Moses*, but though whether the law were then formally spoken or no is a dispute, yet it is without al dispute, that the mouth of God had then given a law or rule of life to his people; and so *Eliphaz* might safely and truly say, *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth*, there

Propheta sunt quasi os dei quia per ipsos loquitur ut est.

there having been a Revelation of the minde of God among the faithfull in all ages & times. God never left his people to their own will, nor them to be their own Guid and Counſeller. For when the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 2. 14.) that *the Gentiles having not a law are a law unto themſelves*; his meaning is not that they had no law, but one of their own deviſing. They indeed had not the law of God formally ſpoken to their eares, and preſerved in tables of ſtone, but they had the ſubſtance of the law of God naturally written in their hearts. So then, there hath alwayes been a law, from his mouth formally in the Church, & naturally in the world. Therefore ſaith *Eliphaz*, *Receive the law from his mouth*, and when he ſaith, *Receive the Law from his mouth*, it may have a double Oppoſition.

Ex ore ejus notanter dicit, i. e. non ex ore aut arbitrio suo. Merc.

First, To the will and wiſdome of *Job*; As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Thou haſt been hitherto a law to thy ſelf*, that is, thou haſt followed thy own advice, run on upon thy own head, now Receive the law from his mouth. Man, naturally hath high thoughts of himſelfe, and would be a law to himſelf. Not as (*Rom.* 2. 14. which place was touched before) *The Gentiles having not a law, were a law to themſelves*; that is, they had the law of God written in their hearts by nature, but beſides that, there is a law which man would be to himſelfe againſt that law of nature written in his heart, and againſt the light of nature ſhining in his conſcience, he would ſet up a law, even his own Luſt, in oppoſition to the law of God. Thus he would be a law to himſelfe, and not *Receive a law from the mouth of God*. Therefore ſaith *Eliphaz*; Now *receive the law from his mouth*.

Secondly, (from his mouth) may be oppoſed to the mouthes of others; as if he ſhould ſay, if thou wilt not truſt us, nor take our word, then truſt God, we would not have thee depend upon us, nor upon any man living, not on the Judgement or Authority of any Creature, but receive the law from his mouth; there is a law and a truth come from God, let thy faith be guided, and thy life ordered by that.

Hence Note.

It is our duty to receive the rule from God.

The Lord hath power to give us the law, and we muſt receive the law from him. None have power to Impoſe a law upon us but God himſelfe, nor may we deviſe a law for our ſelves: *God is the*

the only Maſter of the Conſcience, he alone can ſay, *Receive the law at my mouth*. If you aske, what is it to receive the law? I anſwer, it is more then to give it the hearing. To receive, is, firſt, to believe the law; ſecondly, to receive, is to honour and reverence the law, thirdly, to receive the law, is to yeeld up our ſelves to the obedience of it, to be caſt into the mould of it, to ſubject our ſelves wholly to the minde of God in it; Then we receive the law when we take the Impreſſions of it, and have as it were the Image and ſtamp of it upon our ſpirits, and in our lives: fourthly, then we receive it when as it follows in the Text, *we lay up his word in our hearts*: barely to receive it is not enough; you muſt lay it up, treaſure it up.

And lay up his word in thy heart.

This is oppoſed,

Præcedentis partis expoſitio & amplificatio. Ita legem ſuſcipere ponas proprie, diſponas arte cura ſollicitudine aſſerendi.

First, To forgetfulneſſe of the word, receive the law and let it not ſlip out of thy memory.

Secondly, It is oppoſ'd to negligence in the practice of the law, lay it up that it may be forth coming to direct thee in every duty. In converſion the law is written in the heart; every godly man hath a Copy of the law in his heart; That's the deſcription of a godly man, (*Pſal.* 37. 31.) *The law of God is in his heart, none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide*; which is not an univerſall excluſion of all fayling & ſlipping, as if every godly man were as much paſt ſinning, as he is paſt periſhing: but when 'tis ſaid, *none of his ſteps*, the meaning is, few of his ſteps ſhall ſlide, or he ſhall never ſlide ſo in any of his ſteps as not to recover his feet and get up again. He ſhall walke very holily, ſo holily as if all his walkings were but one continued act of holineſſe. But, to the text, None of his ſteps ſhall ſlide quite and for ever out of the way, becauſe the law of God is in his heart. What *David* ſpeaks in that prophetical Pſalme of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 40. 8. *Thy law is within my heart*) is true in its degree of every Chriſtian, all the lawes of God are in his heart. That Character is again given of them (*Pſal.* 84. 5.) *In whoſe heart are thy wayes*; there is a ſuiting of the mind of God and the heart of man together in regeneration. But now the duty ſpoken of in the Text is another thing; for a man that hath the law written in his heart may yet poſſibly forget to lay up the word and law of God in his heart, he may (under temptation and

the preſſures of corruption) be negligent in that; it is the worke of a godly man, who hath the law of God in his heart already, continually to lay up the law in his heart; and ſo we are to underſtand ſuch Scriptures as theſe (*Pro* 7. 3.) *Keepe my Commandements and live, and my law as the apple of thine eye, bind them on thy fingers, write them on the table of thine heart* &c. The firſt writing of the law in the heart is by the finger of the Spirit, by Gods own finger. As it was God that firſt wrote the law in tables of ſtone with his own finger, ſo it is he that writes the law in theſe fleſhly Tables of the heart by the finger of the Spirit: yet *Solomon* perſwades his ſon to write the law upon the Table of his heart: when grace is received, and the law once written in our hearts, we doe as it were put in ſeverall freſh Copies of the law, we are continually writing divine notions and Inſtructions upon our hearts; this renewed act is aſcribed to us, becauſe we through grace joyne in it. We have an Expreſſion of like import (*Pro.* 4. 21.) *My ſon attend to my words, encline thine ear to my ſayings: let them not depart from thine eyes, keep them in the midſt of thine heart.* The heart is ſaid to be the midſt or Center of the body, now, ſaith he, *keep the law in the very midſt of thine heart*, in the ſafeſt place; as the heart is the ſafeſt place the middle of the body, ſo the middle of the heart is the ſafeſt place of the heart. So we may underſtand that of *David*, *I have hid thy Commandements in my h art* (Pſal. 119. 11.) And (*Deut.* 6. 6.) *Th ſe words which I command thee this day, ſhall be in thine heart*; that is, *thou ſhalt lay them up there.* Of this laying up the law in the heart we are to underſtand *Eliphaz* here; as if he had ſaid, *O Job, thou haſt often heard of the law, but thou haſt been a forgetfull hearer, now heare it, and hold it now* (as the Apoſtle exhorts the *Hebrews*, *Heb.* 2. 1.) *give the more earneſt heed to the things, which thou haſt heard, or ſhalt hereafter hear, leſt at any time thou ſhouldeſt let them ſlip, or thou ſhouldeſt run out* (as we there put in the margin) *as a leaking veſſel.*

Further, This laying up the word in the heart, is oppoſ'd unto a bare barren knowledge; it is not enough to have the word of God in our heads, that is, to know it: it is not enough to have the word of God upon our tongues, that is, to ſpeak of it, but we muſt lay it up in the heart; For though the heart in Scripture, takes in the underſtanding, and the whole ſoule, yet chiefly it reſpects the af-

fections, *lay up the word in thine heart*, that is, let thy affections be warm'd with it, while thy memory retaines and keepes it, and thy underſtanding is enlightned with a true notion of it.

Hence Obſerve.

Firſt, *The word of God is a precious thing.*

We doe not lay up trifles and traſh, but precious things, and treaſure; we lay up our Plate and Jewells, our Gold and Silver, the word of God ſhould be more to us than thouſands of gold and ſilver, it is the moſt precious Jewell, 'tis treaſure, and therefore it muſt be laid up.

Secondly, *The heart is the Arke or Cabinet, in which the word muſt be laid up.*

There was an Arke or Cheſt provided for the law (*Exod.* 25. 21.) and that Arke was Chriſt, he was typified by it, and indeed the law would be too hot for our hearts, too hot to lye there if it had not firſt layn in the heart of Chriſt, we (ſince fallen) could never have been an Arke for it, if he had not been. The tables of the law were laid in the Arke, and the Arke (in which the law was put) had a mercy-ſeate which did cover it all over (The dimenſions of the Arke and of the mercy-ſeate were exactly the ſame, two cubits and a halfe in length, and a cubit and a halfe in breadth, (*Exod.* 25. 10. 17.) ſo that nothing of the law could appeare or riſe up in Judgement againſt poore ſinners. The propitiatory or mercy-ſeate covered all. Now as Chriſt hath been the Ark of the law to protect and cover us from the condemning power of it; ſo the hearts of beleevers muſt be the Arke of the law, where it muſt be laid up with a readineſſe of minde to yeeld our ſelves up to the commanding power of it. *David* prophecying of Chriſt ſaith (*Pſal.* 40. 10.) *I have not hid thy righteouſneſſe within my heart*, yet he had ſaid before, *I delight to do thy will, thy law is within my heare.* To clear which Scripture take notice that there is a two fold hiding of the righteouſneſſe or word of God in the heart. Firſt, ſo as to obſcure or conceale it from others, in that ſence *David* ſaith, *I have not hid thy righteouſneſſe in mine heart, I have declared thy faithfulneſſe and thy ſalvation, and not concealed thy loving kindneſſe and truth from the great Congregation.* And thus no man ought to lay up the truths, the law, the promiſes of God in his heart to conceale and ſtifle them there. Se-

condly, There is a hiding of the law in our hearts, first, that it may be safe, lest Satan or the world should snatch it from us. Secondly, That we may further consider of it; when a man hath got an excellent truth, or Scripture, he should lay it up in his heart to ponder and meditate more upon it, to draw out the sweetnesse, and to experience the power of it. Thirdly, That we may have it ready at hand for our use; and so the Scribe instructed for the kingdom of heaven is described by bringing forth out of his treasury things both new and old. How sad is the condition of many that have heard much, but laid up little or nothing at all of all that word which they have heard. Some having laid it up in their note books, are satisfied with that; 'tis good and usefull to doe so; but do not let it lye there, get a Copy of it in your hearts; a few truths in your hearts are better to you then many truths in your bookes, no man was ever saved by the word in his booke; unlesse that word were also written in his heart. God commanded the *Jewes* (Deut. 6. 8. 9.) to write the law upon the *post of their houses, and on their gates, to bind them as a signe upon their hand, & as frontlets between their eyes.* They were commanded also to put fringes upon the borders of their garments (*Numb.* 15. 38.) which our Saviour calls *Phylacteries.* (Matth. 23. 5.) these were ribands of blue silke, or as some say, scroles of parchment upon which the law being first wrought or written, and then bound upon their garments, *they were to look upon it, and remember all the commandements of the Lord* (Numb. 15. 39.) *Now*, saith Christ, *they make broad their Philacteries, and enlarge the borders of their Garments*; as much of the law as you will upon their Cloaths, but none of it in their hearts. Thus the proud Scribes and Pharisees went about as it were Cloathed with the word of God, but his word was farre from their hearts, nor did it appeare in their lives, it is a meer vanity to have much of the law in our bookes, while we neglect to keepe it in our hearts, and act it in our wayes. The former is good, but it doth no good without the latter. The want of this, the laying up the word in the heart, causeth the great want of Saints in the things of God; and as many loose that Grace which they seemed to have, so many are at a loss in the use of that Grace which they have, because they have not laid up the word of God in their hearts so carefully as they ought. We say proverbially, *Sure bind and sure find; They who would surely finde the com-*

Vanissimi profecto Pharisæi illi, qui cum ipsi non servarent incorde mandata, at membranulas decalogi complicantes & quasi coronã capiti facientes. phylacterium ex sua proprietate, Custoditorium est. Bold.

comfort of the word of God when they need it, had need to bind it sure, when they receive it.

JOB, CHAP. 22. Vers. 23, 24, 25.

If thou return to the Allmighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity farre from thy Tabernacles.
Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brookes.
Yea, the Allmighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.

ELiphaz having invited *Job* (at the 21 verse) to renew his acquaintance with God, and now again pressing him to return to God, he reckons up those advantages which might move, and incourage him to it; he tells *Job* what will follow his returne to, & acquaintance with God, and these advantages are of two sorts.

First, Temporall, and outward; secondly, spirituall, and inward; the temporall good things which he assures him of in case he repent, and turne to God, are set downe first more generally in the 23. verse, *Thou shalt be built up*; secondly, They are set down particularly; first, He should then have riches, gold and silver in the 24. verse; secondly, protection, *The Almighty shall be thy defence*, (v. 25.) as he will fill thy house, so he will guard thy house and keep all safe.

In the following parts of the Chapter, *Eliphaz* assures him of eight blessings spirituall.

First, Joy in God, *ver.* 26th; *Thou shalt have thy delight in the Allmighty.*

Secondly, Confidence, or holy boldnesse before God; *Thou shalt lift up thy face unto God*; thou shalt not hide thy head, and run into corners, but *lift up thy face.*

Thirdly, (which is an effect or part of the former) freedome in prayer; *Thou shalt make thy prayer to him*, (v. 27th)

Fourthly, He assures him of audience, or of an answer to his prayer in the same verse; *He shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vowes*;

vowes; that is, thou in thy prayer having made vowes to God, God shall hear thy prayer, and so give the occasion to pay thy vowes.

Fifthly, He promiseth him not onely that his prayer shall be heard, but that his very purposes and designes shall be fulfilled; *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established to thee*, v. 28. When thou resolvest upon such a way, or course in thy affaires, thou shalt have this priviledge, *thy decree shall stand.*

Sixthly, He promiseth him direction and counsell, what way he should take, what course to run in the close of the same verse; *And the light shall shine upon thy wayes*; that is, thou shalt see what to doe, the Lord will give thee counsell.

Seaventhly, He gives him hope of rising out of any trouble, or that when others are overtaken with calamities, he should be preserved, at the 29th verse; *When men are cast down then thou shalt say, there is a lifting up, for God will save the humble person.*

Eightly, He promiseth, that he shall not onely have blessings personall, and family blessings, but he shall be a publique blessing, (v. 30.) *He shall deliver the Island of the innocent, and it is delivered by the purenesse of thy hand.* Thus you have both the generall scope of this latter part of the Chapter; which is to stirre up *Job* to return to God, and likewise the particular blessings and mercies which are held forth as arguments moving him to returne.

Vers. 23. *If thou return unto the Allmighty.*

To Returne is used frequently in Scripture in a metaphoricall sense, and signifies as much as to repent; sin is a going away from God, great sinning is a going farre from God, a going, as it were, into a farre Country, such sinners would goe out of Gods sight, and fall out of his memory. *Eliphaz* had charged *Job* deeply with such departures; and now he speakes to him of returning.

And here we may consider the condition or state of *Job*, and the season in which *Eliphaz* presseth him to this duty, he was in an afflicted condition, the hand of God was upon him. Now *Eliphaz* adviseth him to return; Intimating at least, that the present dispensation of God towards him, was a speciall opportunity for the duty he moved him unto.

Hence Note.

When God afflicts us, when his hand is upon us, he speaks to us, repent, or bespeaks our repentance.

How

How often in Scripture doth the Lord complaine as if he were wholly frustrated of his designe, when either nations or persons being smitten by his judgements did not returne unto him, or repented not. (*Isa* 9. 13.) *They turne not to him that smiteth them*: that is, they turne not to me the Lord: I have smitten them, and I alone can heal them, *yet they turne not to me*; as if the Lord had said, I therefore smote them that they might bethink themselves of returning, but they turned not to me. As they turned not at my word, or to me speaking, so they turned not at my sword, or to me smiting. I see they are not onely *Sermon-proofe*, my Prophets spake to them in vain, but they are *judgement-proof* also, my hand is upon them in vaine, they returne not. And as it was then, so at this day, for may we not observe, some mouldering in their estates, crushed in their hopes, crossed in their children, blotted and blasted in their credit, weake and sicke in their bodies, even tired and worne out under severall afflictions, yet no thought of returning to the Lord, or of making their way perfect before him. So that the Lord may say to them, as he once did to his antient people the *Jewes* (Isa. 1. 6.) *Why should ye be smitten any more, ye will revolt more and more.* The returning of many is like that which *Solomon* speaks of (*Pro.* 26. 11.) *As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a foole returneth to his folly*; *As Jesurun waxed fat, and kicked*, so some will be kicking while they waxe leane.

Further, *Eliphaz* doth not speake barely to *Job* of returning, but he directs him to the object; *If thou returne*

To the Allmighty.

And that is expressed in some translations very emphatically, *Return home to the Allmighty*, return till thou comest to or reachest God, *be thou sure to repent home*; so the word is used (*Hos.* 14. 2. *Joel* 2. 12. *Amos* 4. 6.) return home to God, stay not short of him in your repentance, that is, repent fully, seriously; And the intendment of *Eliphaz* in speaking thus, might be to reprove *Job* for his former (by him supposed) hypocrisie: thou hast returned before, but not to the Allmighty. surely thou didst repent only as an hypocrite in former times when thou madest the greatest shews of repentance. Therefore now repent as a sincere convert. Thy former repentance was to the a fruitlesse repentance, and therefore doubtlesse but a fained and false repentance. Thou couldst ne-

עד שדי *reverte é usq; ad diminu[illegible], videtur idem esse cum* אל שדי

Si plane & ferio, toto corde, non ut ante hypocrita fuisti, &c. Merc.

ves

ver after it recover out of thine afflicted, thy ruinous condition, and therefore ſurely thou didſt never by it recover out of thy ſinfull condition, or from thy ſins. But now, I promiſe thee, *if thou return to the Allmighty, thou ſhalt be built.*

Hence note.

That, *True repentance is a full, a home returning to God.*

Much of the progreſſe of a Chriſtian is to goe backward, backward (I meane) from thoſe ſins and evills to which he hath (by temptation) been carried forth; nor (having ſinned) can any man goe forward till he return to God. We read in Scripture, of God returning to us, as well as of our returning unto God, in both there is repentance; when God returnes to us, he repents of the evill of puniſhment, that he hath brought upon us; and when we returne to God, we repent of the evill of ſin which we have committed againſt him: onely be ſure (as the points directs) that ye returne home to God. The Prophet found *Iſraels* repentance defective in this (*Hoſ.* 7. 16.) *They returne* (that is, they make a ſhew of repentance) *but not to the moſt high.* There is a repentance which brings the ſoul never the neerer unto God. And that's a repentance (as we ſpeake) *never the neere*, or to no purpoſe. Thus another Prophet taxeth their faſting (*Zech.* 7. 5.) *When ye faſted and mourned in the fifth and ſeaventh month, even thoſe ſeventy yeares, did ye at all faſt unto me, even to me?* Obſerve how he doubles it upon that point, as if the whole emphaſis of repentance lay upon that point; *To me, even to me.* As *David* in confeſſing of his ſin (*Pſ.* 51. 4.) *Againſt thee, thee, thee only have I ſinned*, &c. Many faſt, but not at all to God, they returne, but not at all to God. They faſt to themſelves, and return to themſelves, that is, their own intereſt, not the honour of God is the motive and end of their faſting and repenting. And hence the Prophet is plaine and downright with *Iſrael* in this caſe (*Jer.* 4.1.) *If thou wilt returne, O Iſrael, ſaith the Lord, returne unto me*, as if *Iſrael* had uſed to returne, but alwayes ſhort of God, or not to God, *Iſrael* made ſome ſtop in the worke of repentance before he came at God. Now then (ſaith the Lord by his Prophet) *O Iſrael, if thou wilt returne, return to me.* If thou haſt any further purpoſe to returne, be perſwaded to return to ſome purpoſe. Let not thy repentance be any longer, ſuch as is to be repented of. All our returnings are but wanderings, unleſſe we returne to God.

But

But when may we be ſaid to return to God?

I anſwer; firſt, when we returne out of a ſenſe of ſin againſt God, as well as of ſmart upon our ſelves; for when we returne only becauſe of ſmart, we return to our ſelves rather then to God; as when it is ſaid in *Hoſea* (Chap. 7. 16.) *They returned but not to the moſt high*: we may ſee the reaſon of this charge at the 14th verſe: *They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they aſſemble themſelves for corne and for wine, and they rebell againſt me.* As if he had ſaid, all their crying and howling, is not becauſe they have ſinned againſt me, but becauſe their ſins have pincht them, they doe not mourn becauſe of their wickedneſſe, but becauſe of their wants. 'Tis famine that moveth them, not my fear. They would fain be at their full tables again, they are all for corne and wine, nothing for grace and holineſſe. We may ſay of ſome perſons repenting, as *Job* (Chap. 6. 6.) of the wild Aſſe braying, *Doth the wild Aſſe bray when he hath graſſe, or loweth the Ox over his fodder*; he applyed it to his own caſe, that he did not cry out without cauſe, nor complaine when he felt no paine; but (I ſay) we may apply it to ſome perſons repenting. *They would never bray if they had but graſs enough, nor low if they had foddar enough*; that is, if they had but outward comfort enough, corne and wine, health and ſtrength enough, did they but abound in theſe, you ſhould never hear them complain nor ſhed a tear, how much ſoever they abound in ſin; All the world cannot ſatisfie the ſoul of a godly man, till (after ſinning) he be reconciled to God: His ſoule is hungry and thirſty, notwithſtanding all his corn and wine, till he be filled with the favour of God. And, this is indeed *to returne to the Allmighty.*

Secondly, Then alſo we returne to the Allmighty, when we turne ſpecially from and mourn for that ſinne whereby we have moſt provoked the Almighty; when that which hath moſt offended God, is moſt offenſive and burdenſome unto us. For though in repentance, every ſin is to be repented of, yet ſome more; As *Samuel* ſaid to the houſe of *Iſrael* (1 Sam 7. 3.) *if you do return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the ſtrange Gods and Aſtaroth.* But why doth he exhort them to put away that ſtrange God *Aſtaroth* by name, more then any other of their ſtrange gods? I anſwer; it was becauſe they had moſt provoked the true God by worſhipping that ſtrange God, and therefore he counſels

them as ever they would approve themselves to have returned to God in their repentance, to look to it, that they turned from *that Idol*. If every strange God must be put away when we returne to God, how can we returne to God, if we put not away *our Astaroth*. Thus the rule was given by the king of *Niniveh*, in proclaiming a fast (*Jon.* 3. 8) *Let them turne every one from his evill way* (that is, from his beloved sin) *and from the violence that is in their hands*, that is, from the sin of oppression, by which they got much into their hands. But why doth he instance in that sinne? Surely because that was the common sin of that City, they were an oppressing people, and loved the gaine of oppression, or to get by violence; They lived more by the bloud of others, then by their own sweate, more by the violence, then the labour of their hands, therefore they must particularly repent of that sin. If the covetous man return to God, he must turn from every sinne, and from his covetousnesse. If the proud man returne to God, he must turne from every sin, and from his pride, this is the nature of returning to the Allmighty, yet

Thirdly, Unlesse we doe all this with the whole heart, we doe not return to the Allmighty (2 *Chron.* 6. 38.) *Jere.* 3. 10. *Jere.* 24. 7. The wicked are serious and cordiall in sinning, they must be so in repenting. But some sinner possibly may say, I have gone away too far to returne; No, *Jer.* 3. 1. *Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me, saith the Lord.* Another will say, I have sliden back and relapsed, I have as it were, repented of my repentance. The Prophet answers this doubt (*Jer.* 3. 12.) *Return thou back-sliding Israel, saith the Lord.* And againe (*v.* 14) *Turne O back sliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you*, &c.

If thou return, &c. *Eliphaz* having thus shewed him that it is his duty to *returne to the Allmighty*, now proceeds to shew that it will be his happinesse, and this he doth by an enumeration of those manifold blessings which follow our returning to him. Whereof the first is,

Thou shalt be built up.

Affliction and trouble, which are the fruit of sin, pull downe, and lay us wast, godly sorrow and repentance, which are our turning from sin, have a promise of this good fruit, *That we shall be built up again.* This

This building up, may be taken two wayes; first, more generally for an encrease in all good things; secondly, more specially for an encrease in children. In the Hebrew the same word, which signifies *a sonne*, signifies, *to build*, because children build up their fathers house, or are their fathers building; in that sense the word is often used, (*Gen.* 16. 2. *Gen.* 30. 3. *Ruth* 4. 11.) It is said, (*Exod.* 1. 21.) that *God boilt the midwives houses*; which some interpret, he gave them children, or made them more fruitfull in child-bearing. We read in the law how that man was to be dealt with, who refused to take his brothers wife, according to the commandement of God in those times, and the conclusion of all is (*Deut.* 25. 9.) *So it shall be done to the man that shall not build up his brothers house*, that is, who refuseth to marry his brothers widdow, and (through the blessing of God) to have children by her, which would be as the building up of his house, or the continuance of his name and family. Thus some understand the phrase here; *Thou shalt be built up*, that is, thou, who hast lost all thy children, Thou, whose house hath been pul'd downe by the fall of a house (*Ch.* 1. 19.) shalt have more children, and so thy house built up again. But I rather take the phrase here in that larger sence, and so *to be built up*, implyeth all kinde of prosperity in outward things. (*Mal.* 3. 15.) *Now ye call the proud happy, yea they that worke wickednesse are set up*, we put in the Margin, *are built up*, that is, they are very prosperous, they may have what they will in this world, or (as we say) *the world at will*. And (note that by the way) 'tis the worst character of an age, *when they that worke wickednesse* (which ruines the best built State) *are built up*. The Lord makes a promise in the language of this Metaphor to the Church, (*Jer.* 31. 4.) *I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel*; As if he had said plainly, I will blesse thee, and raise thee up out of the dust of thy present desolate condition, into a glorious fabricke of prosperity and honour, so it follows in the same text; *Thou shalt againe be adorned with thy tabrets, and goe forth in the dance of them that make merry.* This sence of the word is cleare in that opposition used in the Psalme (*Ps.* 28. 5.) *Therefore saith the Lord, I will destroy thee, and not build thee up*, that is, thou shalt be destroyed for ever, I will never repayre any of thy ruines, thine shall be as *Asaph* speakes (*Psal.* 74. 3.) *Perpetuall desolations.* So that, when *Eliphaz* promiseth *Job*, *Thou shalt be built up*; his meaning

Ut filius inde dicitur, quod ædificium sit & structura parentium. Merc. *Prolem dedit.* Merc.

meaning is, thy ruin'd ſtate ſhall be repaired, and thou ſhalt have not onely a beautifull, but a wel foundation'd felicity.

Hence note;

It is no vain nor unprofitable thing to repent and turne to the Allmighty.

If we by repentance pull downe the ſtrong holds of ſin, if we forſake and lay waſte our luſts, the Lord will build us up, he will build us up with all manner of bleſſings; repentance is fruitfull: There are many who profeſſe they repent, but they doe not bring forth fruits meet for repentance; but as true repentance is accompanyed with our fruits of holineſſe and obedience towards God, ſo with Gods fruits, the fruits of his love and mercy towards us. There is a kind of repentance in hell, there's weeping, wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth, but that's a fruitleſſe repentance, as well as a faithleſſe repentance; the damned are under chains of everlaſting darkneſſe. Unſound repentance, or the repentance of hypocrites in this life, is like the repentance of the damned in the next life, but true repentance is fruitfull. If we as the Baptiſt exhorted the Jewes (*Matth.* 3.) *Bring forth fruit meete for repentance*, our repentance will bring forth fruit meet for us; we ſhall have good things of all ſorts, if we ſorrow (as the Apoſtle ſaith the *Corinthians* did) after a godly ſort; godly ſorrow is rewarded with joy; if we humble our ſelves, God will lift us up. The ſorrows of Goſpel repentance, are like the ſorrows of a woman in travaile, who (as Chriſt ſpeakes *Joh.* 16. 21.) *ſtraight way forgets her paine for joy that a man is borne into the world.* The pangs and throws of godly ſorrow are therefore ſaid by the Apoſtle to cauſe repentance not to be repented of, becauſe that repentance brings forth joy to be rejoyced in, a maſculine joy, joy that a man-childe of Grace to build up our ſpirituall houſe is brought into the world. *If thou returne to the Allmighty, thou ſhalt be built up.* And

Thou ſhalt put iniquity farre from thy tabernacles.

The word imports, firſt, putting away with indignation: ſecondly, putting away to the utmoſt diſtance: therefore we tranſlate, *put away farre*; 'tis but two words in the Originall: *Thou ſhalt put iniquitie farre*, &c. Iniquity may be taken either for ſin, or for the effects of ſin, that is, puniſhment, if we take it in the firſt ſence for ſin it ſelfe; and then this latter clauſe muſt be underſtood as a duty; *If thou returne to the Allmighty, thou ſhalt be built up, thou ſhalt put away iniquity farre from thee*, that is. It is thy duty to *put away iniquity far from thee*, as if *Eliphaz* here did ſet forth more fully what repentance is; *thou ſhalt be built up if thou returne to the Allmighty*; that is, if thou returne ſo as to put thy iniquity farre from thee; if we take iniquity in the ſecond ſence, for the puniſhment of iniquity, then the words are a promiſe, as if he had ſaid, *if thou return*, &c. then thou ſhalt rid and diſcharge thy ſelf and thy houſe of all the troubleſome effects of ſin; Thou ſhalt put Iniquity, or all the ſad iſſues and conſequents of iniquity farre from thee, none of them ſhall touch thee to annoy thee.

Mr *Broughton* pitcheth upon the former ſence in his tranſlation; *If thou caſt far off unrighteouſneſſe from thy tents.* That gives a perfect ſence to the whole ſentence, and from thence we may

Obſerve;

That, *in true repentance ſin muſt be utterly caſt off and put away.*

We returne not at all to the Allmighty, till we wholly turne from ſin, nor will the Allmighty build up our houſe, till we put iniquity quite out of our houſe; till we turne it out of houſe and home; out of the houſe of our family, out of the home of our hearts; nor is it enough to put ſinne away a little, or a little way, but it muſt be put far away. There are ſeverall degrees of putting away ſin; firſt, There is a putting it away out of our practice, or converſation, ſo that it hath no viſible being or abode in us or with us. This is a putting of ſin away, but this is not a putting of ſin farre away. Secondly, There is a putting of it out of our affections, or out of our hearts; not as if we could keep it (while we are in the body) from having a place or dwelling there, but as keeping it from having a throne or reigning there. This is to put ſin very farre away from us; it is no great thing to put ſinne out of our hands, but 'tis hard to get it out of our hearts; hypocrites will (poſſibly) lay downe the practice of it, but ſtill their ſpirits cleave to it, they are not at all alienated from the love of it, but only reſtrained from the acting of it; ſuch are oftentimes kept from doing iniquity, but they do not at al put away their iniquity, much leſſe put it far away. As it is with a naturall man in reference to his doing of Good, ſo to his not doing of evill; If good be at any

any time in his practice, yet it is farre from his ſpirit, he hath no minde to it, he cannot ſay the law of God is in his heart, or that he delights to doe it; ſo if evill be at any time put out of his practice, yet it is ſtill in his ſpirit, his minde is toward it, he cannot ſay that his heart is with-drawn from it, or that he hates it. No, but as the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſpeakes of the ſtubborne Jewes (Ezek. 11. 21.) *Their heart walketh after the heart of their deteſtable things.* As every Godly man is (in the main) like *David*, A man after Gods own heart, and walketh after the heart of God; ſo every ungodly man is a man after the heart of the devill, and every Idolater or worſhipper of falſe Gods (who is one of the worſt of ungodly men) is after the heart of his falſe gods, and he walketh after the heart of his falſe gods, which the Prophet calls *deteſtable things.* Whatſoever is moſt after the heart or according to the deſires and commands of an Idol, that the Idolatrous heart walketh after; that is, he loves it, he delights in it, and thus doth every naturall mans heart walke after the heart of his luſt, though ſometime his feete walke not after it, or he may ſeeme to lay it out of his hand. But he that turnes indeed from ſin, deales with it when he is repenting of it, as the Lord doth when he is pardoning it. How is that? The Lord in pardoning ſin, puts it farre from us (*Pſal.* 103. 12.) *As farre as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo farre hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us*; That is, he hath removed them from us to the utmoſt imaginable diſtance; for ſuch is that of the Eaſt from the Weſt: they and we ſhall no more meete together againe, then the Eaſt and Weſt ſhall or can meet at all. And thus in repenting a godly man deſires to put his ſin as farre from him as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, that he and they may never meete together in the practice of them, as he is aſſured that God hath ſo pardoned them that they and he ſhall never meete together in the puniſhment of them.

Thou ſhalt put away iniquity farre

from thy Tabernacles.

Iunxit ante hac nec Jobum nec ejus filios culpa cacaſſe, ideoque eversum cy ſibi exitiales. Merc.

In which words he includes more then his owne perſonall repentance; for by the *Tabernacles*, we are to underſtand the whole family or houſehold, the tabernacle conteining, is put for the perſons contein'd; in this *Eliphaz* ſeemes to ſtrike at *Job* for his former courſe, as if he had ſaid, *Wickedneſſe hath lodged not only in thy heart,*

heart, but in thy houſe, in thy family, children and ſervants. And this ſurely was it which provoked the Lord to cruſh thy family of children and their ſervants with the fall of a houſe; now therefore I counſell thee to put away iniquitie from thy tabernacle, that is, from all that belong to thee, from all that are under thy ſhadow, and are committed to thy truſt and charge.

Hence obſerve;

That they who repent truly ſhould indeavour to purge ſin, not only from themſelves, but from all that belong to them.

They ſhould cleanſe not their perſons onely, but their families, they ſhould ſweep their houſes, as well as their hearts from ſin. (*Gen.* 35. 2.) *Then Jacob ſaid to his houſehold, and to all that were with him, put away the ſtrange Gods* (or, the eſtranging *Gods* (ſuch are Idols, they are not onely *ſtrange*, becauſe new Gods, and *ſtrange*, becauſe 'tis a ſtrange or wonderfull thing that man ſhould be ſo beſotted as to worſhip ſuch things for Gods, but they are eſtranging Gods) becauſe they withdraw or ſteal away the heart from the true God; therefore ſaid *Jacob put away the ſtrange Gods) that are among you, and be cleane, and change your garments*, This outward changing of their garments ſignified the changing or cleanſing of their ſoules. God principally looks at that, and the outward ceremony hath no acceptance at all without the inward ſincerity; In compariſon of which, as the Lord ſaid in *Joel*, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*, ſo he would ſay here, *change your hearts, and not your Garments.* Now *Jacob* was very carefull that this bleſſed *change of Garments*, betokening the change and cleanſing both of heart and life, ſhould be the livery of all his family and houſehold. Family ſins bring family judgements as well as perſonall: and they that have the charge of a family, have (in a great degree) a charge of ſoules as well as of bodies; every Maſter of a family hath *cure of ſoules*: And he is to ſee ſo farre as lieth in him, that no ſinne nor wickedneſſe remaine or be harboured in his family, that his children and ſervants live not in ignorance, nor in any evill. In the 6th of *Numbers*, *Moſes* gives charge to the Congregation, *That they ſhould depart from the tents of thoſe wicked men, Corah, Dathan, & Abiram*; it is dangerous to be neer the families of the wicked, but it is more dangerous to have wickedneſſe remaining in our family, in our ſervants,

vants, or in our children. And if Maſters endeavour not by all due meanes, to remove ſin out of their family, that in a little time may remove them out of their family, or (as we ſay) eate them out of houſe and home. *Thou ſhalt put away iniquity farre from thy Tabernacle.* Thus much of this part of the verſe, in the firſt ſence, as *iniquity* is taken for ſin; yet,

Further, as the word *iniquity* is taken for *puniſhment*, *thou ſhalt put away iniquity* (or the effects of iniquity) *farre from thy Tabernacle*; and then the words are both a new promiſe and a further explication of what is meant by being *built up*, which was the former promiſe, *Thou ſhalt be built up, and all evill ſhall depart away from thy Tabernacle. Iniquity*, which properly ſignifies the evill of ſin, is often put in Scripture, for the evills of trouble and ſuffering; and as all acknowledge this to be a truth, ſo ſome judge it the truth ſpecially intended in this place. I ſhall therefore briefely, note from it,

That, *when we truly returne to God from ſin, then ſuffering evills depart from us and ours.*

For though the Lord be pleaſed to diſperce variouſly for triall of his people, and often ſuffers the evil of affliction to hang about their Tabernacles, who deſire ſincerely, and endeavour faithfully to *put all iniquity farre from their Tabernacles*, yet this is the promiſe of God, & this hath been often experienced by Godly men: That God hath turned trouble out of their doores, when they have humbly and zealouſly laboured to turne ſin out of their hearts.

Eliphaz having incouraged *Job* by this generall promiſe, he draweth it forth into particulars. And that, firſt, in reference to outward things.

Verſ. 24. *Then, ſhalt thou lay up gold as duſt, and the gold of Ophir as the ſtones of the brookes.*

בצר *munire. Aurum teſtiſſimum quaſi ab igne munitum, aut quod ſit ſecuritatis munimentum.*

Then, that is, when thou haſt acquainted thy ſelfe with God; then, when thou haſt laid up his law in thy heart, then, when thou haſt returned to the Almighty thy ſelf, and put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacle: *Then thou ſhalt lay up gold as duſt*, &c. The word which we render *Gold*, ſignifies to fortifie, or to defend, and

and it is tranſlated *a defence* at the 25th verſe. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 7. 12.) not onely, That wiſdome is a defence, but that *money is a defence*, (that is, it procures defence) and Gold is the chiefe of mony. Though Gold be not a defence *formally*, yet *virtually* it is; Gold defends it ſelfe againſt all the forces of fire, and it is a principall means of defending us againſt the fire and fury of the Greateſt dangers. *Thou ſhalt lay up Gold as duſt*, &c. But Chriſt ſaith (*Math.* 6. 19) *Lay not up treaſures for your ſelves on earth.* And it was a rule given concerning the King of *Iſrael* in the Leviticall Law, long before *Iſrael* had a King, (*Deut.* 17. 17.) *He ſhall not greatly multiply to himſelfe ſilver and gold.* How then, doth *Eliphaz* ſay, that he who repents, *ſhall lay up gold as the duſt?* is that fit worke for him? I anſwer, the words are not to be underſtood as an exhortation to bend his endeavours to the gathering of riches; but as a promiſe from God that he ſhall, by a bleſſing from above, gather ſtore of riches here below. *Thou ſhalt lay up Gold as the duſt* By gold here, and ſilver in the next verſe, we are to underſtand all manner of riches; becauſe gold and ſilver are the chiefe riches, therefore all is contained under them. And when he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as the duſt*, the words receive variety of renderings; ſome thus, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold above the duſt*, as if he ſhould ſay; thou ſhalt have more gold than duſt, which is a ſtrain of rhetoricke, expreſſing aboundance; Others read, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold upon the duſt*; As (*Pſ.* 24. 2.) *He hath founded it upon the Seas*; A third renders, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold by the duſt* Like that (*Pſal.* 1. 3.) *A tree planted by the river ſide*: A fourth thus, by way of counſell; *And lay gold in the duſt.* Which two latter readings, are expounded as a direction given to *Job*, how he ſhould lay up gold, he muſt not lay up gold in his heart and ſpirit, but in the duſt, or by the duſt: As if had ſaid; *Put that purer duſt, that better concocted and refined duſt, in the common duſt; put the duſt to duſt; put thy gold in its proper place, where God and nature put it. 'Tis but duſt, and ſo a fit companion for the duſt*; yea (ſay ſome) 'tis as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid; *Doe not ſo much as make roome for it in thy houſe, provide not cheſts for it, let it lie where it had its originall; It came from the duſt, there leave it, returne it backe to its own Country, to the place of its nativity.* A Heathen hath this notion concerning gold and ſilver, &c. And he labours much to ſhew that the ſite & poſition of theſe things in nature holds forth how

Et pone in pulvere Aurum. Coc. *Noli animum ad id apponere, nimiſq; illud dirigere, ſed nihili æſtima, dejice in terram unde ortum eſt æſtima ut terram & lapides petræ.* Scull. *Pone ubi deus & Natura poſuit.* Coc.

Nulli nos vitio naturacon ciliat, nihilquidē quod avaritiam no strum irritaret posuit in apertis pedibus aurum & argentū subjecit, calcandum ac premendum dedit, & quicquid est prop er quod calcamur & premimur. Sen. ep. 94.

how we ought to receive and estimate them; *Even nature* (by which he meanes the ordinary course set in nature) *draws us off from coveting Gold and silver; there is nothing which may provoke or stir up covetousnesse, which God hath advanced or set up high in the order of nature; Gold and silver are the chief objects of Covetousnesse, now both these, as also whatsoever else man is pressed about, and as it were trodden under foote in the dirt for, by burdensome or covetous cares, God hath thrust or trodden under our foote Gold doth not fall out of the clouds of heaven, but lyeth under the clods of the earth*; there God hath put them to be trampled and trodden under our feet, that we might scorn to have our affections trampled upon and trodden underfoote by them, or such things as they. So then, All that this interpretation or translation aimes at in saying *Gold must be put in the dust*, is onely to shew us, that our estimations should be taken off from it, or that we should place it as low in our thoughts, as God hath placed it in the order of nature. And this is a spirituall sense, suiting that of our Saviour; *Lay not up for your selves treasures on earth*, make not great preparations to keep your earthly treasures, especially let them not be kept in your heart, or lye there where Christ onely and the treasures of heaven ought to be laid up. Put your gold in the dust, or let it be esteemed as dust, seeing at best it is but well concocted dust. So Gold and silver are called *Amos* 2. 7. *That pant after the dust of the earth upon the head of the poore.* So the Prophet describes their extream covetousnes, who will be rich though it be by empoverishing those who are pooreſt.

Yet I conceive in this place *Eliphaz* hath another ayme; And that where he saith; *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust*, his meaning onely is, *thou shalt lay up plenty of Gold*, or thou shalt gather much riches; for the dust of the earth or sand of the Sea are used frequently to signifie abundance, or the exceeding numerousnesse of things, or persons: *Who can count the dust of Jacob? and the number of the fourth part of Israel* (Numb. 23. 10.) that is, they are as the dust that cannot be counted, or numbred; that was the promise made to *Abraham* (Gen. 13. 16.) *I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth.* So here, *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust*, that is, gold more then thou canst tell, or cast up; Thou shalt have not onely enough, but even more then enough. *Job* was very rich before, now saith *Eliphaz*, *Thou shalt have gold as the dust*, thy riches

riches shall be encreased, thou shalt have a greater store and stock then ever. *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust.* And as it followeth

The Gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooke.

'Tis the same thing in another tenour of words; the Hebrew is *Thou shalt lay up Ophir as the stones of the brook.* The word *gold* is not expressed in the Originall; yet it may well be understood; *Ophir* is put for the Gold of *Ophir*, because *Ophir* was the place of Gold, yea of the richest Gold (1 *Kings* 9. 27, 28.) *They came to Ophir and fet from thence gold foure hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon. Ophir* was a noted place in those times for gold, both in reference to the plenty and purity of it. 'Tis a question much controverted, where *Ophir* is; some making it to be an Iland in *Africa*; others place it in *India*; since the discovery of *America* or the *West-Indies*, many contend, that *Ophir* is now called *Peru*; and they have (as they conceive) a probable ground for this opinion from that place in the holy Story (2 *Chron.* 3. 6.) Where 'tis said, *He* (that is, *Solomon*) *garnished the house with precious stones for beauty, and the gold was gold of Parvaim*, which is neer in sound to the name of that Gold-abounding Country in *America* called *Peru*. I shall not undertake to decide this Geographicall Controversie about *Ophir*: That which is agreed on all hands is enough for my purpose, and the explication of this Text, that *Ophir* was a Country famous in ancient times, both for the plenty and excellency of the Gold found there and brought from thence. Therefore said *Eliphaz*, *Thou shalt lay up Ophir*, that is, *the Gold of Ophir*, pure and precious Gold.

Ophir Nomen insula unde aurum primùm nota adferebatur; quod inde Ophir appellatum, hoc est, ut quidam opinantur Obrysum quasi Ophirisum Druſ.

Vide Bold. *in hunc locum Jobi.*

As the stones of the brooke.

That is, thou shalt have abundance of gold; to lay up gold *as the dust*, and to lay it up *as the stones of the brook*, or as the stones of the valley, are paralel expressions for plenty of Gold, suteable to those hyperbole's (2 *Chron.* 1. 15.) *The king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones*, &c. And *Ch.* 9th of the same booke (*v.* 27.) *The King made silver in Jerusalem as stones, and Cedar trees made he, as the Sicomore trees that are in the low plaine in abundance.* Thus in the text *Job* is promised to lay up the Gold of *Ophir*, as the stones of the brooke.

The Vulgar translation reads differently; *He shall give thee for*

Dabit pro terra silicem & pro silice torrentes aureos. Vulg.

earth a Rocke, and for a Rock streams of Gold; which is a proverbiall speech, implying a change for the better; as if he had said, thou before who hadst a sandy foundation, shall now build upon a rock as (*Math.* 7. 27.) And we finde such language in the Prophet (*Isa.* 60. 7.) where the Lord promiseth, *for brasse I will bring gold; for Iron silver, for wood brasse*, &c. So here, *For earth I will give thee stone, and for stone Golden brooks, or brooks of Gold*, that is, *those brookes where gold is*, or, *I will give thee much Gold out of those brookes.*

Idq; ponendo pro pulvere lectissimum aurum & pro rupe Ophirinum flavia ipse. Jun.

Junius seems to favour this translation most of all, rendring the whole verse thus, connexing it with the former; *Thou shalt be built up* &c. *and that by giving thee for the dust the choicest gold, & for the rock the river gold of Ophir.* By all assuring *Job* of a happinesse in his civil state in case he did change or mend in his spirituall state. Then he who had so great a change in his worldly state for the worse, should have a greater change in his worldly state for the better. The next verse is a continuation of the promise, much to the same intent, and almost in the same words, and therefore I shall open that also before I give any observations.

Vers. 25. *Yea the Allmighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.*

There is some difference in the reading of this verse, for the word which we translate *defence*, is the same which we translate *gold* in the former verse. And hence some translate thus; *thy gold shall be mighty*. Making the word *Shaddai* (which is one of the names of God, and usually rendred Allmighty) to be as an Epithite to the word *Gold*. *Thy gold shall be strong or mighty.* And thus some translations render the word *Shaddai* (Ezek. 1. 24.) where the Prophet saith, *I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Allmighty*; so we render; but others thus; *As a mighty voice*; So in the present text, whereas we say, *The Allmighty shall be thy defence*, or according to the strictnesse of the word; *The Almighty shall be thy gold*, others give it thus; *Thy gold shall be mighty.* And this answers the latter clause of the verse, where we reade; *Thou shalt have plenty of silver*; yet put in the Margin, *Thou shalt have silver of strength*, or, *strong silver.* These readings have an elegancy in them.

But

But I shall keepe to our owne, which is profitable to us and sutable to the text; *Yea the Allmighty shall be thy defence*; the particle (*yea*) sheweth that this is a higher step of mercy then the former; as if he had said, *Thou shalt not onely have gold which is a defence, but better then gold, even the Almighty for thy defence*, or, *God who is better then Gold, will be thy defence, and the defence of thy Gold.* The Hebrew word is plural, *Defences*, which intimates; first, all sorts of defence; secondly, strong defence; *The Almighty shall be thy defences*; All manner of defence, and a strong defence unto thee.

Hence note;

God himselfe is pleased to be the Lord Protector of his people (who repent and turn to him) both in their persons and estates.

There are many in the world who have gold, but there are few who have this defence for it. The Prophet *Haggai* speaks of those who earned money, but put it *into a bag with holes*: that is, they could not hold or keepe what they had gotten. It is the Lord that establisheth the creature to us, and defends it for us. The best things in the world take wings and are gone, unlesse the Lord stay them with us; and unlesse the Lord defend and keep them for us, they would soon be puld out of our possession. Some mens estates wast away they know not how, there is a hole in the bottome of the bagge they thought not of. Others have their estates violently taken away from them, because the Lord is not their defence. The Lord is The protector of his people, the Lord is a Castle, a strong Tower, all manner of fortifications about his people, to defend their estates and persons, much more their soules. And *Eliphaz* seems to mind *Job* that he once had, but now had lost this defence; God once made a hedge about him, or rather was a hedge about him, but he opened a gap or withdrew, and then in came the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* and spoyled all. Now then (saith he) returne to the Lord, and he will once againe be thy defence. *How safe are they that have God for their defence, who live under the shadow and covert of the Almighty! How safe are they* (I say) *and all that they have.*

The vulgar latine is so full of this sense, that he leaves out the word *defence*, and only saith; *The Almighty shall be (or shall stand up for thee) against thine enemies*; and in this perfect outward happinesse

Eritq; omnipotens contra hostes tuos. vulg.

pinesse consisteth. For to have much, and that secured, is all we can desire for the things of this world. Many have gold, and riches store, but the thing that troubles them is this, how to make all sure; *Returne to the Lord, and he shall be thy defence*: he shall be an *assurance Office to thee*, he shall protect thee against all winds and weathers, against all enemies and pirates; The Allmighty shall be thy defence and the defence of thy gold.

Further, Because the word which we render *defence*, signifieth gold also, as was shewed; therefore some keep to that reading, and thus translate this 25 verse, *And the Allmighty shall be thy choice gold, and silver, and strength unto thee.* Which reading is likewise followed by Master *Broughton*; *And the Allmighty will be thy plentifull gold and silver of strength to thee.* This sence of the word is comfortable indeed, for to have told *Job* only this; *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust, and gold of Ophir as the stones of the brook*; this had been (though a great mercy, yet but a common mercy) such as the men of the world have and enjoy. *Many that know not God lay up gold as the dust, and they who serve him not, have often store of silver.* But when God himselfe saith, *I will be your Gold and silver*, This is not onely the richest of temporall, but the riches of all spirituall mercies. For when 'tis said, *the Lord shall be thy choice gold and silver of strength to thee*, the meaning is, he will be better to thee then the choicest Gold, and a greater strength then silver nnto thee. This is a rare and a distinguishing mercy. *Wicked men may have gold from God, but no wicked man hath God for his gold.*

Eritq; omnipotens lectissimum aurum tuum & argentum viresq; tibi. Jun.

Hence note;

That God himselfe is the riches, and fulnesse, the gold and silver of his people.

The Lord is my portion, saith my soule; whose soule said this? It was the soule of a mourning *Jeremie*. And when said he this? even then, when their lands and houses were possessed by the enemy, even then, when their Gold and silver with all their goodly things were carryed captive into *Babilon*; Then *Jeremie* said, *The Lord is my portion* (Lam. 3. 24.) the Gold and silver which I had in my house are gone, but my Gold & silver in heaven is not gon into captivity, he is my portion still and for ever. *They who have God for their gold and silver, are happier and richer then gold and silver*

silver can make them: What can be said more to draw our hearts to God, then this promise, that God will not onely give us riches, but that himselfe will be our riches? What can be said more to take a covetous mans heart off from the love of his Gold then this? take thy heart off from thy Gold and God will be thy gold. And so what can be spoken more prevailingly to the voluptuous man, who delights to swim in rivers of sensuall pleasures; O take off thy heart from these pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, and God will be thy pleasure for evermore. What stronger argument to take down the ambition of man, who hunts after high places and dignities in the world? then to tell him, withdraw from this pursuite, and *God will be thy honour, and thy high place.* We may say to the ambitious, to the covetous, to the voluptuous, and in a word to all sorts of sinners, Ye shall find all that your sins can offer you, and infinitely more in God; your honours, and pleasures, your gold and silver, you shall have altogether in him. One of the antients speaks well and truly to the point; *That man is too, too covetous whom God doth not suffice*, or, *who is not satisfied with God.* The onely true reason why any man is not satisfied with God is, because he *knoweth not God*; He that can say knowingly, *the Lord is my God*, cannot but say, *I am satisfied. When God is ours, all is ours.* And the poorest who are rich in faith, have as great a share in this riches, as the richest. *God is the poore mans gold*, they that have neither gold nor silver in their purse (as *Peter* said to the impotent man) may have God in their hearts. The Allmighty is their gold, and silver too, as it followeth in the text.

Nimis est avarus cui deus non sufficit. Bern.

Deus meus & omnia.

And thou shalt have plenty of silver.

Some render, *Thou shalt have silver of wearinesse*; He meanes it not of silver, as it wearies a man in the getting of it, but he meanes it of so great a quantity or summe of silver, as shall weary a man to tell it, or trouble him to weigh it. The manner of accounting silver was anciently by weight, hence that is paid in money is called a *pension*. We translate fully to that sence, *thou shalt have plenty of silver*, for they that have so much as tires and wearies them to tell or weigh it, have store enough. We put *silver of strength* in the Margin. Silver is a strong mettall, and it is strength; great strength to Man. This rendring suites best with the beginning of the vers. *The Allmighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have*

ותועפות *a radice* יעף *lassus fatigatus fuit.*

Argentum lassitudinum; quod præ copia lassos reddit homines numerando illud vel certè appendendo. Nam olim appendebant argentum, unde pensionis *vocabulum in sermone latino.* Drus.

Nihil tam sanctum quod violari, nihil tam munitum, quod non expugnari pecunia possit. Cic.

בסף תועפות

have silver of strengths, or silver to strengthen thee. As for plenty, that was fully set forth in the former verse, where he is promised *Gold as the dust, and the Gold of Ophir as the stones of the Brooke.* Besides, the word is divers times applyed to expresse strength by, but rarely if at all in Scripture to expresse plenty by, and here our translaters render it so, not properly but tropically, as appears before; for properly it expresseth the greatest strength, as first, *The strength of the Unicorn* (Num. 23. 22.) *God brought him out of Egypt, he hath as it were the strength of an Unicorn*, Secondly, *The strength of Mountains* (Psal. 95. 4.) therefore I conceive it is best rendred *silver of strength*; as gold is cloathed with a word which signifies *defence*, so silver is joyned with a word that signifies *strength*, because there is much strength and defence in both, money being the sinews or strength of warre; So that to say, *Thou shalt have silver of strength*, is as if he had said, *thy silver shall be a strength, or a blessing to thee* Some have silver & it is no strength to them; or he calleth it, *silver of strength*, because it should be confirmed, and established for his use and in his possession. He should finde, by experience, that there was tacke in it, that it was solid silver, or silver that had strength in it. So then, these are but severall expressions of the same thing, all which gathered together heighten up the promise of this outward mercy; he should have gold, and God would be his defence, yea his gold, and he should have silver plenty, enough of it to make a man weary to tell it, or he should have silver of strength, his silver should be a strength to him, and all this is assured him upon his repentance and return to the Allmighty.

Hence note;

First, *That godlinesse is the best and neerest way, even to worldly gaine.*

Godlinesse is gainfull, though a godly man should die a beggar, but besides there is worldly gain in it, these promises are not made in vaine. Christ speaks as much (*Math.* 6. 33.) *Seeke first the kingdome of God, and the righteousnesse thereof; and all other things* (even gold and silver) *shall be added to you.* And the Apostle is full for it (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) *Godlinesse is profitable for all things*, 'tis good to make men rich, it will bring in worldly profits; Godlinesse hath the promise of gold as well as of grace, of silver, as well as of pardon and peace, doe not think that godlinesse is barren of out-

outward blessings, or that we must needs loose all gaine in this world, by getting that which fits us for the Glory of the next world. Know, that as the Lord makes his wayes sweet to his people by inward communications of himselfe, revealing his love and grace to them, yea in them, so he makes his wayes sweet to his people by giving them outward good things, blessing their basket and their store, filling their hearts with food and gladnesse.

Secondly, Note;

That, *The godly man may lawfully possesse earthly riches, gold and silver.*

It is no sin to be rich, but when riches are got by sin; Poore *Lazarus* lay in the bosome of rich *Abraham*; As many poor men may be called the Devills poore, so some that are rich may be called Gods rich men. Againe if Godlinesse have a promise (as it hath) of riches, then the godly may lawfully possesse riches; which also may be instruments in their hands of glorifying God, & doing good among men. Nor can it be denyed that they know best how to use the things of the world, and how to be the best Stewards of earthly treasures, who are instructed for the kingdom of heaven, and are (as the Apostle *Peter* exhorts Saints to be (1 *Pet.* 4. 10.) *Good Stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Thirdly, Note;

That riches, gold and silver are at Gods dispose.

He bestows them where, and upon whom he pleaseth. This promise of plenty of gold, upon repentance and returning to the Almighty, must needs proceed from this supposition, that the Almighty hath gold and silver in his power. *The world is the Lords, and the fulnesse of it* (Psal. 50. 12.) *God is the best Indies for gold.* If any would trade for gold prosperously, let them trade heavenward; for God is every where Lord of the soyle, and he saith of all the precious *mines* hidden in the bowels of the earth, They are *mine.* See how the Lord speaks as the great proprietour of all the gold, and silver, of all the good things of this world; (*Hos.* 2. 8, 9.) *She did not know that I gave her corne, and wine, and oyle, and multiplyed her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal, therefore I will returne, and take away my corne in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my*

ſlaxe, &c. *All's mine.* Thus the Lord voucheth himſelf the great owner of all theſe things, all the gold and ſilver, all the wool and the flaxe, all the corne and wine are his. When the people and Princes of *Iſrael* with *David* their king offered ſo willingly and ſo liberally Gold and ſilver, &c. for the building of the Temple. *David* makes this confeſſion for them all (1 *Chron.* 29. 14.) *All things come of thee, and of thine owne have we given thee.* And may he not doe what he will with his own? Men think they way, ſurely God both may and will.

Fourthly, Obſerve;

That, *the plenty and ſtability of the creature, is from God as well as the poſſeſſion of it.*

Eliphaz promiſeth *Job* from the Lord *gold as the duſt, and as the ſtones of the brooke, with ſilver of ſtrength*, that we have it in ſuch or ſuch a proportion is from the Lord, as much as that we have any thing at all; he can give much as well as little, and that our proportion hath a defence and ſtrength in it is from the Lord; therefore we ſhould honour the Almighty for every portion and proportion of worldly riches, and for the eſtabliſhment of our portion whatſoever it is. Silver and gold have no ſtrength in them unleſſe the Lord who giveth theſe give them ſtrength, and bid them ſtay with us to do us good. Laſtly, Obſerve;

We may lawfully poſſeſſe abundance of outward things.

'Tis ſinfull to make abundance our aim, or to contend for much in temporals, to do ſo in and about ſpiritualls is our duty, and our contention for the higheſt degree our commendation. We ſhould deſigne it, to lay up the Gold of Grace, as the duſt and the ſilver of ſanctification as the ſtones of the brook; We ſhould forget all that we have, that we might get what we have not. Our deſirings while pitcht upon an eternal object cannot be immoderate, but in temporals they quickly may: and therfore as to them, our moderation ſhould be known to all men. Yet if God give in abundance of temporalls in the lawfull exerciſe of our callings, we may warrantably enjoy it as a bleſſing from him. The providence of God doth often bound us to a little, & we ought to be contented with the leaſt portion of outward things, with bare food & raiment, but the word of God doth not bound us to a little, nor doth it ſay, it is un-

unlawfull to have much. And as it is not unlawfull to have much of the world, ſo it is a great exerciſe and tryall of our Graces to have much: As there are ſome Graces of a Chriſtian which come not to try all till we are in want, ſo there are other Graces which come not to try all unleſſe we have aboundance. Want tryeth our patience, and our dependance upon God for a ſupply of what we have not; and aboundance tryeth our temperance, our humility, our liberality, yea and our dependance upon and faith in God, for the ſanctifying, bleſſing, & making of that comfortable to us which we have. When a rich man ſeeth an emptineſſe in his aboundance without the enjoyments of God in it, he exereiſeth as high a grace, and ſheweth as heavenly a frame of mind, as that poore man doth who ſeeth and enjoyeth a fulneſſe in God, in the midſt of all his emptineſſe. And therefore *Paul* puts both theſe alike upon a divine teaching, (*Phil.* 4. 12.) *In all things I am inſtructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to ſuffer need.* And had it been unlawfull to enjoy plenty, *Eliphaz* had never preſſed *Job* to repentance by this motive, *The Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver.*

JOB, CHAP. 22. Verſ. 26, 27.

For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face unto God.

Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him, and he ſhall heare thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy Vowes.

IT hath been ſhewed from the former context, how *Eliphaz* encouraged yea provoked *Job* to repentance, and returning to God by the propoſall of many promiſes by promiſes of outward, and temporall mercies, gold, ſilver, and protection. He might have what he pleaſed of God for the comforts of this life. if his life were once pleaſing unto God. In this latter part of the Chapter he riſeth higher and propoſeth ſpirituall promiſes; And he begins with the beſt of ſpirituall promiſes, *The free injoyment of God himſelfe.*

Verſ. 26. *For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty*, &c.

As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid; *If thou doſt indeed repent and turn from ſin, thy conſcience which now troubles, yea torments thee, ſhall have ſweet peace in God, and thou who now groveleſt with thy eyes downe to the ground, by reaſon of thy preſſing guilt, and miſery, ſhalt then with confidence lift up thy face unto God in prayer, and thou ſhalt finde God ſo ready at hand with an anſwer, that thou ſhalt ſee cauſe chearefully to performe thy Vowes, which thou madeſt to him in the day of trouble*; That's the generall ſcope of this latter part of the Chapter. I ſhall now proceed to explicate the particulars.

For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.

The firſt word implyeth a reaſon of what he had ſaid before. Having ſpoken of temporall promiſes, he confirms his intereſt in them by aſſuring him of ſpirituall; *for then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.* As if he had ſaid *God will not deny thee outward comforts in the creature, ſeing he intends to give thee the higheſt*

eſt comforts, even delight in himſelfe. 'Tis an argument like that of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *He that ſpared not his owne Sonne but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* Thus *Eliphaz* ſeems to argue, ſeeing God will give thee himſelfe to rejoyce in, or to rejoyce in himſelf, how can he deny thee gold and ſilver with thoſe other conveniencies which concerne this life? theſe being indeed as *nothing* in compariſon of *himſelfe.*

Then ſhalt thou delight, &c.

Then, that is, when thou returneſt to God, and not till then, then thou mayeſt expect to receive much ſweetneſſe from him, ſuch ſweetneſſe as thy ſoule never taſted or experienced to this day.

Then ſhalt thou have thy delight.

The word ſignifies to delight, or take contentment, whether it be outward contentment, or inward contentment, the delight of the body, or the delight of the minde; And ſo an univerſall delight, thy whole delight ſhall be in the Lord. *Moſes* (Deut. 28. 56.) deſcribes thoſe women by this word, who were made up of delight; *Thy tender and delicate woman*, that is, ſuch as are ſo delicate that they are the delight of all who behold them, or who are themſelves altogether devoted to their delights, who (as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of the wanton widdow (1 *Tim.* 5.) *live in pleaſure*, Theſe are threatned with ſuch calamities as ſhould render their very lives a paine to them. The word is uſed againe (*Iſa.* 58. 13, 14.) where the Prophet ſpeaks of keeping the Sabbath; *If thou turne away thy foote from the Sabbath from doing thy pleaſure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight*; what then? *then ſhalt thou delight thy ſelfe in the Lord.* thou ſhalt have curious delight, all manner of delight in the Lord, *if thou call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord*; *honourable and ſhalt honour him*; if thou haſt a delight in duty, thou ſhalt have the delight of reward.

עדן *deliciatus fuit corpore vel animo. Sonat etiam aliquid delicatum & molle.*

Thus *Eliphaz*, *then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.* And 'tis conſiderable that he doth not ſay, thou ſhalt have thy delight in the mercifull, or gracious God, but in the Allmighty: in him thou ſhalt have thy delight, whoſe power is over all, and who

is

is able to doe whatsoever pleaseth him. Even the power and allmightinesse of the Lord shall be as pleasant to thee as his mercy, and loving kindnesse.

Further, *delight* in the generall nature of it, consists in these two things.

First, In the suitableneſse and convenience of the object, and the faculty, whether sensitive or intellective.

Secondly, It consists in the reflection and application of the faculty upon the object. So that to delight our selves in the Allmighty, hath these two things in it.

First, A suitableneſse in our soules to the Lord.

Secondly, The soules reflecting upon the Lord as good and gracious unto us. This reflect act breeds and brings in delight, and works the heart to an unspeakeable joy in God. By this last and highest act of faith, we take in the sweetnesse of the Almighty, and delight our selves in him mightily. This faith doth not only suck the promises, wherein the love of God is evidenced to us, but is it selfe an evidence of the love of God to us. *We sucke and are satisfied with the breasts of consolation* by believing (*Is.* 66. 11.) that is, we believing draw forth that sweetnesse of the promise which the word declares to be the portion of Beleevers. Thus spirituall delight is made up; and therefore Saints are said *to rejoyce in beleeving, with joy unspeakable and full of glory* (1 Pet. 1. 8) that is, having as much and as cleare a manifestation, yea participation and taste of that Glory in beleeving, which is prepared and reserved for them against the next life, as they are capable to receive, and more then they are able to expresse, in this life. *Then shalt thou delight thy self in the Allmighty*, We may look upon the words first as a command; and then observe,

That, *it is our duty to delight our selves in God.*

Delight in God, is both a priviledge and a duty, it is commanded in the Law, and it is promised in the Gospel. God is pleased to give us many things in the world, not onely for necessity, but for delight, A heathen looking upon the various provisions which the Great Creator hath made, not only for the maintenance of man in his being, but for his comfortable and pleasurable being. Some of which affect the sences, the eye, the ear, the taste, *&c.* others are sweetly contentfull to the understanding, with all the faculties

faculties of the soule, He (I say) concludes this from it; *The Nay, enim ne bountifull Creator hath provided for more then our necessity, or he hath provided more then will barely serve our turne to live upon, we are levid even up to our delights.* Now I say, though the Lord hath provided delights for us in the creature, yet it is our duty, our greatest our highest duty to delight chiefly in the Lord, to delight in him first, and to delight in nothing but in reference unto him; nothing should be pleasing to us, but as there is an impresse or stampe of the love of God upon it, or as it tasts of his goodnesse. And indeed what can delight us long but *this thought?* that God delighteth in us, or that we are a delight to God; that God is Good, and that God is good to us; having tasted his goodnes, we should love and delight in him, above all our delights. The Psalmist (*Psal.* 137. 6.) preferred *Jerusalem* above his chiefest joy; how much more should we preferre the God of *Jerusalem* above our chiefest joy. God delighteth in man whom he hath made, and who is his son by Grace, next to Jesus Christ who is his son by nature, and Jesus Christ delighteth in man whom he hath redeemed, and should not man delight in his maker, in his father, in his redeemer? We have a most divine description of the delight which the Father takes in Christ his Son, and which Christ taketh in his redeemed ones, (*Pro.* 8. 30 31.) *Then was I by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight* (Christ was the delight of his father, and he delighted in his father) *rejoycing always before him; rejoycing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delight was with the sons of men.* Jesus Christ himselfe takes up many of his delights with the sons of men, whom he calls *the habitable parts of the earth*, even those of the sons of men that are a habitation of God through the Spirit. Now (I say) as the delight of the Father is in the Sonne, and the delight of the Son in the Father, and the delight both of Father and Son in the Saints, *in the habitable parts of the earth*, or *with the sonnes of men*; so the delight of the sonnes of men should be in the Father, and in the Sonne; there should our delight be, there should we take our highest contentment.

Hæ sunt piorum delitiæ & suavissimæ voluptates deo plenæ, in quibus ejus sunt habitare inter eos qui ipsum animo revolvunt & colunt.

Secondly, the words are rather to be taken for a promise; *Then shalt thou have thy delight in the Lord*; *Then*, that is, when thou turnest from sinfull delights, or delight not in sin, I assure thee of spirituall delight.

Whence

Whence obſerve;

That they who mourn for, and turne from ſin, ſhall have delights in the Lord.

When once ſinne is bitter to us, the Lord will be ſweet to us; and until ſin be bitter to us, the Lord is not ſweete to us; ſin hinders our delightfull enjoyment of the creature, it puts gall and wormwood into our diſh, and cup, it is that which makes all relations grievous and burthenſome to us; yet this is but a ſmall matter, that it hinders us from the contentment, and ſweetneſſes which are to be had in the creature; ſin takes us off from delighting in God. That ſoul cannot delight in the Almighty, who loveth and continueth in the love of ſinne. If ſuch profeſſe delight in God, it is but a falſe boaſt, and a high preſumption; it is impoſſible for ſuch to delight in the Lord indeed. *Iob* (Chap. 27. 10.) ſaith of the hypocrite; *Will he delight himſelfe in the Almighty? will he alwayes call upon God?* He may pretend to a delight in the Almighty, he may have ſome flaſhes, ſome raptures, but his joyes and delights are not in the Almighty, what joyes ſoever he hath they are in ſomewhat below God; the hypocrite may delight himſelfe in ſomewhat received from the Almighty, in ſome preſent benefit, or future expectation that he hath from the Almighty; he cannot delight in the Almighty himſelf, or in God as God.

As it is impoſſible in the nature of the thing, for a man to delight in ſin, and in God too; ſo God hath ſaid that he who hath a delight in ſin, ſhall not finde any delight in him. God hath ſaid, *Delight thy ſelfe in me, and I will give thee the deſires of thy heart,* (*Pſal.* 37. 4.) But if any man will follow the deſires of his owne heart, he ſhall not delight himſelfe in God. *Sin ſeparateth between God and us* (Iſa. 59. 2.) that is, it ſeparates between the comforts and mercies which are in God, and us; ſin doth not, cannot ſeparate us from the power, or preſence, from the eye, or juſtice of God, ſo ſinne doth not ſeparate (for God is nigh to ſinners both to ſee what they are doing, & to puniſh them for what they have done ſinfully) but ſin ſeparates from all thoſe delights that flow from God, from thoſe joyes which his people take in him; yea ſin breeds a ſtrangeneſſe between God and the ſoule, ſo that the ſoule that loveth ſinne, cannot have any holy familiarity or converſe with God. The Lord ſaith to thoſe who repent (*Iſa.* 1. 18.) *Come let us reaſon together,* &c. As if he had ſaid, I am now ready to debate the matter with you that repent, and how great ſoever your ſinnes have been, they ſhall be blotted out. Whereas before the Lord tells them that he was weary of them, and that they were a burthen to him in all their ſervices; Now when we are a burthen to God, God is never pleaſant to us; if the Lord ſay he is weary of us, we cannot ſay we delight our ſelves in him. Our delight and pleaſure in God is the fruit of his delight in and well-pleaſedneſſe with us.

Thirdly, *Eliphaz* propoſeth this delight in the Lord, as the moſt winning promiſe.

Hence note;

Delight in the Lord is the higheſt and choiceſt mercy.

There is nothing better, nothing ſweeter then to delight in the Lord; delight in the Lord hath all true delights in it. *David* ſpeaks this out fully in that place lately quoted to another occaſion (*Pſal.* 37. 4.) *Delight thy ſelfe in the Lord, and he ſhall give thee the deſires of thy heart*; that is, thou ſhalt have all thy deſires fullfilled in this thing; delight in the Lord will be the fulfilling of all thy deſires; not only ſhall they who delight themſelves in the Lord, have all their deſires filled up, but their very delight in the Lord is the fulfilling of all their deſires. What is the glory of heaven, but delighting in the Lord? And he who delights in the Lord, feeles not the want or abſence of any earthly Good. *In thy preſence is fulneſſe of joy, and at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore* (Pſal. 16. 11.) Heavenly glory is nothing but delight in God, and all earthly good is nothing without delight in God. We may affirme foure things of this delight, in oppoſition to all worldly delights.

Firſt, This is a reall delight, worldly delights are but ſhaddows, or pageant like ſhews of delight. The joyes of a hypocrite, are like his holineſſe, meere appearances of joy; he hath no reall, no true joy, as he hath no true, no reall holineſſe. That man doth but faine a taſte of joy, whoſoever he is, that doth but faine the practice of holineſſe. Thus who wickedly hold out a holineſſe which they feeje not, ſhall talke of joyes which they finde not.

Secondly, Delight in the Lord is a ſtrong delight, yea it is a ſtrengthning delight; That muſt needs be ſtrong joy, which is

ſtrengthning joy; ſuch is the joy of the Lord, as *Nehemiah* told that people (*Neh.* 8. 10.) *The joy of the Lord, is the ſtrength of the ſoule, the ſtrength of the inward man, it makes us mighty, it makes us giants to run our race, the race of holineſſe.* The giant rejoyceth to run his race, becauſe he is ſtrong, and knowes he can doe it. The joy of the Lord is our ſtrength, and is both an evidence that we are ſtrong, and a meanes to make us ſo. Worldly delights are weake, and they weaken us, Delight in the Lord is ſtrong, and it ſtrengthens.

Thirdly, It is a laſting delight; not like the *crackling of thorns under a pot*, (to which *Solomon* elegantly compares the *laughter of the foole*, Eccl. 7. 6.) that make a noiſe, and a blaze for a while, but are preſently extinct. Now *Solomons* foole may be either, firſt, the prophane man in the world, or, ſecondly, the hypocrite in the Church; All the joyes of this payre of fools, the prophane worldling, and the formall hypocrite are ſoone in and ſoon out, like crackling thornes. But joy or delight in the Almighty is a laſting delight, it is not for a fit, or a pang, but for a continuance, yea it continueth in the midſt of all worldly ſorrows, for it overcomes and conquers them. There is a laughter in which (ſaith *Solomon*, Pro. 14. 13.) the heart is ſorrowfull, and there is a ſorrow in which the heart laughs; *As ſorrowfull, yet alwayes rejoycing*, ſaith the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) Spirituall joy, or joy in the Lord is not extinguiſhed, though ſurrounded with worldly ſorrowes, *Many waters cannot quench this vehement flame, this flame of God* (as *Solomon* ſpeaks of love, *Cant.* 8.) *neither can the floods drowne it.*

Fourthly, Delight in the Allmighty is a holy delight, a delight which makes us more holy; the delights of the world are impure, and they defile us, we ſeldome take in worldly pleaſures, but they leave ſome ſpot & taint upon our ſpirits or converſations; but the delights we have in the Lord are all pure, yea purifying delights, they make the ſoul more cleare, more holy, more heavenly, they make us like unto the Almighty, in whom our delight is. For look what the object is in which we delight, ſuch is the ſpirit of him that takes that delight; now the Lord in whom this delight is, being altogether holy, they that take delight in him, muſt needs be made or kept holy by it. As delight in worldly things makes the heart worldly, baſe and dreggiſh, ſo this refines & purifies it. The more

more we drinke of the rivers of this pleaſure, the more ſober we are, *to be an epicure* (as it were) *in theſe delights*, is the higheſt temperance. Our feeding cannot be too full, nor our drafts too large upon theſe delights. *Solomon* (Eccle. 2. 2.) who had run a courſe through all worldly delights, and tryed them to the utmoſt, ſaid *of laughter it is mad, and of mirth what doth it?* there is a madneſſe in the mirth of the world, what doth it? that is, what good doth it to any man? many things it doth, it makes men vaine, fooliſh, diſſolute, diſpirited for any goodneſſe; but what good doth it? doth it make any man better, more holy, more wiſe or fit for duty, no, it can doe none of theſe things. But delight in the Lord, is all this, and can doe all this, it is true, ſtrong, ſtrengthning, laſting, holy, a delight that makes us more holy. This is the portion of Saints at all times, though payd them in more or ſpecially at ſome times, and that either, firſt, reſpecting the ſtate and diſpoſition of their own ſoules, as in the reſt, or ſecondly, the ſtate of and promiſed diſpenſations of God to the Church. (*Iſa.* 65. 14. 18. *Iſa.* 66. 11.) *Then* (alſo in a ſpeciall manner) *ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Lord.* And becauſe every man doth freely or willingly looke to that in which he is delighted. Therefore *Eliphaz* addeth,

Quum unus quiſq; licenter eſpicit id, in quo delectatur, ſubdit, vers. ſeq. Aquin.

And ſhalt lift up thy face to God.

But ſome may ſay, is that ſuch a great matter, is it any ſpeciall favour to lift up the face to God? ſeeing to doe ſo is common to mankinde. The Naturaliſt ſaith, *That whereas other creatures looke groveling downward, God gave man an erect countenance, and bid him look heavenwards.* How then doth *Eliphaz* promiſe, *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face to God?* We had the like expreſſion (*Ch.* 10. 15.) *If I be righteous, yet I will not lift up my head.* And (*Ch.* 11. 15.) *Then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot.* The lifting up of the head, and the lifting up of the face are the ſame; implying confidence, or wel grounded boldneſs in him that doth ſo; For all theſe phraſes of ſpeech imply a lifting up of the mind or Spirit to God. As *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 25. 1) *Unto thee O Lord doe I lift up my ſoul.* *Eliphaz* meanes not the lifting up of a heart-leſſe face or head, ſuch as the hypocrite or formaliſt lifts up to God in worſhip, nor the lifting up of a meer living head or face, ſuch as all men lift up to God according to the forme or frame of their naturall

Os homini ſublime dedit. Ovid.

Equiparantur ſunt caput vel oculos vel faciem vel animam ad deum levare. Beld.

Fiduciam habebis recurrendi ad deum. Aquin.

naturall constitution, but the courage and confidence of the soul, and that a holy courage and confidence, is here intended. And there are not many, who can thus lift up their face to God, as is promised here to *Job* by way of priviledge.

And shalt lift up thy face to God.

Faciei elevatio orantis habitus est. Pined

To lift up the face, is taken under a twofold notion in Scripture, first, as a gesture or bodily position in prayer; He that prayeth doth usually lift up his face to God, and so to lift up the face to God, is to pray unto God. A corporal posture being put often in Scripture to signifie a spirituall duty. Thus some understand it here; *Thou shalt lift up thy face to God*, that is, thou shalt pray; secondly (which further complyes with the duty of prayer. To lift up the face, notes (as was touched before) confidence of spirit, and boldnesse, courage, and assurance towards him, before whom the face is lifted up, whether God or man.

Vultum attollit qui sibi bene conscius est animo confidenti. Dent

παρρησιασθῆσῃ ἐναυτίον κυρίου Sept.

The Septuagint who rather paraphrase then translate this text, give this sense fully; *Thou shalt be confident before the Lord (or thou shalt act fiducially and boldly before him) and behold heaven chearefully.* This lifting up the face is opposed to casting downe the face & that is a phrase used in Scripture to signifie shame & fayling of spirit. When courage is down, the countenance is down too; as we say, such a man *hath a down looke*, that is, there is an appearance of guilt upon him. The face is cast down three wayes; First, by fear; secondly, by sorrow; thirdly, by shame. (*Ezra.* 9. 6.) *O my God I am ashamed and blush, to lift up my face unto thee; for our iniquities are increased over our heads.* So (*Luke* 18.13.) the *Publican durst not lift up his eyes to heaven*, and possibly there was a complication of all these three causes why he durst not, feare, sorrow, shame; he was so much terrified, so much grieved, so much ashamed of himselfe, that he durst not lift up his eyes to heaven. It was the speech of *Abner* to *Asahel* (2 Sam.2, 22.) *Turne thee aside from following me; why should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?* that is, if I slay thee I shall be afraid to looke him in the face, nor can I have any confidence of his favour; and it is well conceived, that he spake thus (for it is indeed a very unusuall thing for the Generall of an Army in the very heate of war, to look after the favour of the Generall of the opposite Army, but (I say) 'tis conceived

ceived he spake thus) as being convinced that he had undertaken a bad cause in upholding the house of *Saul* against *David*, and therefore had misgivings that he might shortly fall into the hands of *Joab Davids* Generall, and was therefore unwilling to provoke him by killing his brother. This made him say, *How shall I hold up my face to thy brother Joab?* As if he had said, I shall obstruct the way of my own reconciliation to thy brother, (in case The turne of things in this warre cast me into his hands) by killing thee. Againe we may looke backe to *Gen.* 4.5. where it is reported of *Cain*, That he was wrath, *and his countenance fell*; anger, and sorrow, and shame, falling at once upon him (because the Lord had respect to *Abel* and his offering, but had no respect to him or his) caused his countenance to fall; which phrase stands in direct opposition to lifting up the face in all the three occasions of it. For it implyeth first fear, which is opposed to boldnesse; secondly, sorrow or anger, which are opposed to content and joy; thirdly, shame, which is opposed both to freedome of approach, and liberty of speech. We have an expression which paralels much with this, in that Prophecy of Christ (*Psal* 110.7.) *He shall drinke of the brooke in the way, therefore shall he lift up his head*, that is, he shall rise and appeare like a mighty Conquerour with boldnesse, honour, and triumph. So Christ himself prophecying of the troubles which shall be in the latter dayes, comforts the surviving Saints in this language; *When these things begin to come to passe, then look up and lift up your heads* (that is, then take heart and boldnesse) *for the day of your redemption draweth nigh*, (Luke 21. 28.) that is, the day is at hand wherein you shall be freed from all feares and sorrowes.

Quod legitur Exod 14. 8. *egressos filios Israel in manu excelsa, Chaldaicè dicitur, capite discooperto, i. e. palam, confidenter sine metu.*

Hence observe;

Holinesse hath boldnesse and freedome of spirit with God.

Then shalt thou lift up thy face unto God. As soone as *Adam* sinned, he hid himself from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the Garden, (*Gen.* 3. 8.) He ran into the thickets for shelter, he durst not appeare or shew his face. But when once we are reconciled to God, and sin is taken off, when we are freed from the bonds of guilt, then we have boldnesse, reconciliation is accompanied with the spirit of adoption, *whereby we cry abba father*; we can then speake to God as a childe to his father; the childe

childe dares lift up his face to his father, and ſpeaks freely to him, *Where the ſpirit of the Lord is, there is liberty* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17.) and that a threefold liberty. Firſt, a liberty from ſinne; ſecondly, a liberty unto righteouſneſſe, or a freeneſſe and readineſſe of ſpirit to doe good; thirdly, where the ſpirit of the Lord is, there is a liberty of ſpeech or acceſſe, with boldneſſe in all our holy Addreſſes unto God. As the Apoſtle clearely ſheweth at the 12th verſe of the ſame Chapter. *Seeing then that we have ſuch hope, we uſe great plainneſſe* (*or boldneſſe*) *of ſpeech*, as we put in the Margin of our Bibles to expreſſe the ſignificancy of the Greeke word in the full compaſſe of it. For as becaule we have ſuch hope we ought to uſe great plainneſſe of ſpeech towards men in preaching and diſpenſing the Goſpel to them, ſo great boldneſſe towards God in receiving the offers and promiſes of the Goſpel, for our ſelves. *Eliphaz* having thus ſhewed what freedom *Job*, truely repenting, might have with God in prayer, proceeds in the next verſe to ſhew what ſucceſſe with God, or what fruit he ſhould have in prayer.

Verſe 27. *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer to him, and he ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy Vowes.*

In theſe words we have a further promiſe, leading to a further duty: as before the duty of returning to the Almighty, had a promiſe annexed to it of lifting up the face to God, or boldneſſe in prayer. So now the promiſe of being heard in prayer, is followed with a duty, The payment of vowes.

Thou ſhalt make thy prayer to him, &c.

עתר *multiplicavit, propriè verba fortia fudit in Oratione.*

The word notes the powring out of many prayers, or of a multitude of words in prayer, yet not of bare words, but of words cloathed with power, ſtrong prayers as well as many prayers. For as the Goſpel comes from God to us, *not in word onely, but in power and in the holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance*, (1 Theſ. 1. 5.) ſo prayer ſhould goe from us to God, not in word onely, but in power, and in the holy Ghoſt, &c. Thus, ſaith *Eliphaz*, *Thou ſhalt make many, and mighty prayers, ſtrong prayers, prevailing, conquering prayers*; ſo the word is uſed (*Gen.* 25. 21.) *Then Iſaac intreated the Lord for his wife becauſe ſhe was barren*; that is, he made

made many prayers to God, he made a buſineſſe of praying that he might have a ſonne, though there was a ſure promiſe made to *Abraham* that he ſhould have a ſonne, and that in him, and from him ſhould come the promiſed ſeed. yet *Iſaac* was long without a ſonne, and he leaves it not careleſſly in the decree of God, reſolving Idly, *God hath ſaid I ſhall have a ſon at leaſt, if not many ſons, why ſhould I trouble my ſelfe in the thing.* No *Iſaac* had not ſo learned the minde of God, he was better skill'd in Divinity then ſo, to ſeparate the meanes from the end, or to conclude that we need not pray for that which God hath purpoſed and promiſed. He I ſay, was better inſtructed then ſo, and therefore though he (doubtleſſe) did fully beleeve that God would fulfill the promiſe made to *Abraham* in giving him a ſonne, yet *he entreated the Lord for his wife becauſe ſhe was barren*: and *he intreated the Lord earneſtly*, he made plenty, abundance of prayers; for it cannot be ſuppoſed but that he had prayed for that mercy long before (for it was neere twenty years ſince his marriage to *Rebeccah*, as appears plainly by comparing the 20th verſe of that Chapter with the 26th, the former telling us, that he was forty yeares old when he marryed *Rebeccah*, and the latter that he was threeſcore when *Rebecah* bare *Jacob* and *Eſau*. So that I ſay, we cannot ſuppoſe but ſo holy man as *Iſaac* had been ſuing out the good of the promiſe before) but when he perceived it ſticking ſo long in the birth, then his ſoul fell in travell about it, then he was very fervent in prayer, and would give the Lord no reſt; *Then he entreated the Lord*, &c. The ſame is ſaid of *Manoah* (Judges 13. 8.) *Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and ſaid, oh my Lord, let the man of God which thou didſt ſend come again unto us, and teach us what we ſhould doe unto the childe that ſhall be borne*; he prayed then with much earneſtnes, or made prayers for direction in that thing. The word is often uſed to ſignifie abundance, (*Iſa.* 35. 2.) *It ſhall bloſſome abundantly*, (*Jere.* 33. 6.) *Behold, I will bring in health, and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveale unto them the abundance of peace, and truth.* Not onely ſhall they have peace, and truth, but abundance of them. So here, thou ſhalt not only pray, but a ſpirit of prayer ſhall be powred out upon the aboundantly. *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him.*

Hence note;

Firſt, *Prayer is a dutie.*

We

We owe prayer to God as his creatures, or in regard of our naturall dependance upon him, much more as new creatures, or in regard of our ſpirituall dependance upon him.

Secondly, Note;

It is our duty not onely to pray, but to pray much, or to pray with much fervency.

The emphaſis of the Originall word here uſed, leads us to this as well as many Scripture Authorities. Cold asking invites a denyall, 'tis effectuall or working fervent prayer that prevails much, (*Jam.* 5. 16.)

Note, thirdly.

Prayer is due onely to God.

Prayer is a part of holy worſhip, and all ſuch worſhip is proper to God alone, *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him.* Saints and Angels worſhip God with us; we muſt not worſhip either Saint or Angel with God, no nor God by the helpe and meditation of Saints or Angels. We know no mediator of interceſſion, but he who is the mediator of redemption, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Fourthly, Taking in the conſideration of the time, as before in the former part; *Then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Lord, then ſhalt thou make thy prayer to him.*

Obſerve.

That, *we are never in a fit frame for prayer, till we turn from every ſin by repentance.*

As the Lord will not hear us when we pray, *if we regard iniquity in our heart* (Pſal. 68. 18.) ſo neither are we in a fitneſſe to ſpeak to God in prayer, if we regard any iniquity in our hearts. Repenting and praying muſt be of the ſame length; unleſſe we pent continually, we cannot pray continually, becauſe we ſin continually. *The more holy we are, the more free we are to pray.* Sinne clogs and checks the ſpirit in this great duty, caſt off that weight, and *then, ſhalt thou make thy prayer to him,*

And he ſhall hear thee.

To heare prayer, is more then to take notice of the matter or words ſpoken; to heare prayer, is to grant what we pray for; as our hearing the word of God is more then to take in the ſound or ſence of what is ſpoken; it is to ſubmit to and obey what is ſpoken; Now as we heare no more of the word of God, then we beleeve and practice, ſo the Lord heareth no more of what we pray (in a Scripture ſence) then what he granteth. There are two expreſſions in Scripture which note this.

Firſt, To have regard to a perſon, or to a prayer (1 *Kings* 8 28, 29.) when *Solomon* prayed at the dedication of the Temple, the Lords hearing of prayer, which he then begged, is thus deſcribed, *Have thou reſpect unto the prayer of thy ſervant, and to his ſupplication, &c. that thine eyes may be open toward this houſe night and day,* So it is ſaid of *Abel* (Gen. 4. 4.) *that the Lord had reſpect to his offering*, the Lord looked towards him, and accepted of him; to accept a prayer, is to heare a prayer. *Reſpicere eſt audire.*

Secondly, The hearing of prayer is deſcribed by the preſence of God with thoſe that pray. (*Iſa.* 58. 9.) *Then ſhalt thou call, and the Lord ſhall anſwer, thou ſhalt cry, and he ſhall ſay, here I am.* This is a wonderfull condeſcenſion, 'tis even as when a Maſter calling to his ſervant, he anſwereth, *here, Sir, here I am*; and that is as much as to ſay, *I am ready to your command, I am ready to doe what you will have me, here I am*; ſo ſaith that promiſe in the Prophet, *Thou ſhalt cry, and the Lord ſhall ſay, here I am*, that is, *I am ready to doe what you aske, I am even ready* (O unſpeakeable Goodnes) *at your command* (as our tranſlation of the 11th verſe of the the 45th Chapter of *Iſaiah*, ſpeaks out in plaine termes,) or *I am willing to doe what you will have me to doe.* All which is in effect and vertually contained in the word of the Text. *He ſhall heare thee.* This teacheth us, *Adeſſe eſt audire.*

Firſt, *That God is the hearer of prayer.*

It is the Lords title, *O thou that heareſt prayer, unto thee ſhall all fleſh come* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 65. 2.) God is not only *A hearer of prayer*, but he is *The Hearer of prayer*; to heare prayer is his peculiar prerogative and priviledge as well as his goodnes & mercy; none in heaven or earth have a will to hear prayer as God doth, nor have any a power to do it. No 'creatures eare is long enough to reach the complaints, nor his ſtock large enough to ſupply the wants of all his fellow creatures. The crowne of this honour fits none but God himſelfe. *He ſhall hear thee.*

Secondly, Note;

It is a great mercy, a mercy comprehending all mercy, to be heard in prayer.

He ſhall heare thee; Man cannot deſire a richer favour then to be heard of God. To have audience in the Court of Princes, and among the great men of the earth is a great favour. What greater worldly priviledge can a man have then this, that he hath (the ear of thoſe who are greateſt in the world? When a man ſaith, I have the Princes eare, I can be heard when I ſpeake, we thinke he hath ſpoken enough to make him a man. How great a mercy is it then to have the eare of God? to have ready audience in the Court of heaven? that as ſoone as we call, the Lord is ready to anſwer, *here I am, what's the matter? what would you have? it ſhall be done, your requeſt is granted.* And to ſhew that to be heard by God is the ſumme of all mercies, or all our mercies wrapt up in one, the Scripture teſtifies that not to be heard of God is the ſumme of all judgements, or all judgments wrapt up in one. When the Lord refuſeth to hear, or ſaith he will not hear thoſe that pray, then wrath is coming upon them to the uttermoſt. Thus the Lord threatned the *Jewes* (Iſa. 1. 15.) *When ye ſpread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you, yea when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of bloud*; As it is an argument of the greateſt ſinfulneſſe of man againſt God, not to pray; *Powre out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name*, (Jere. 10. 25.) So it is an argument of the greateſt wrath of God upon man not to be heard in prayer. He that is not heard receives nothing, and he that is heard receives all. And this is the Saints priviledge by Jeſus Chriſt, their prayers are heard, they have welcome audience at the throne of Grace continually. And hence by way of Corallary from the former obſervation, we learne, that

Holy prayers are fruitfull and gainefull prayers.

God hath not ſaid to the ſeed of Jacob, ſeeke ye me in vaine; He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious fruit, (this precious fruit faith and prayer, or the prayer of faith) *ſhall doubtleſſe* (there's no hazard nor peradventure in the caſe) *come again rejoycing, bringing his ſheaves with him.* His ſhowry ſeed-time ſhall be

be bleſſed with a fruitfull and plentifull harveſt. The wicked make many adventures, many voyages by prayer, ſuch as it is, heavenwards, yet come home without lading, without any fraight at all. Their prayers are all loſt, and turn to no profit; and indeed theirs are not prayers but words, or babling rather But holy prayer, the prayer of the holy is prevailing; Thoſe ſhowers of prayers and tears which beleevers ſend up to heaven, are like *the raine* (as the Prophet ſpeakes, *Iſa.* 55. 10.) *which cometh downe, and the ſnow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, & bread to the eater.* Even thus the word of prayer which goeth out of the mouths, or hearts rather of beleevers, returns not to them void, but proſpers in the thing whereto they ſend it. As appeares yet more fully in the next words of this verſe ſpoken by *Eliphaz*; *He ſhall hear thee*; What then?

At quibus cunque tandē modis peccator oret, verum etiam eſt nunquam exaudiri peccatorem ex dignitate ſuæ perſonæ aut meriti ſed ex dei gratia & miſericordia. Bold.

And thou ſhalt pay thy Vowes.

That is, God will give thee the mercies which thou didſt pray for, and thereby give thee occaſion to pay the vowes which thou didſt make to him in caſe he performed thy deſire in prayer. *Eliphaz* is not exhorting *Job* (directly) to pay vowes; but he is aſſuring him that his prayer ſhall be heard, and ſo fully anſwered, that he ſhall ſee reaſon and have aboundant cauſe to pay them, and to pay them both fully and chearfully.

Thou ſhalt pay thy Vowes.

The word ſignifies *free votive promiſes made to God, yet obligatory upon man*; for howſoever as the word implyeth, there ought to be the greateſt freedom and voluntarineſſe in making a vow, yet a vow being made, there is an obligation, a bond or tye upon him that made it to performe or pay it; He that voweth binds himſelfe, but he cannot unbind or abſolve himſelfe from his vow, nor can he retract or call in his lawfull vow.

נדרים *ſignificat votivis promiſſiones deo factas quæ obligant, nec retractari nec ſolvi propria authoritate poſſunt.* Bold.

Eliphaz, I ſuppoſe, here mentions the payment of Vowes, becauſe the godly in thoſe times did often make Vows. When *Jacob* (Gen. 28. 20.) fled from his brother *Eſau*, he in caſe of his ſafe return, *vowed a vow, ſaying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, ſo that I come to my fathers houſe again in peace, then* ſhall

ſhall the Lord be my God, (that is, I will owne and honour him, love and depend upon him more then ever) *And this ſtone which I have ſet up ſhall be Gods houſe, and of all that thou ſhalt give me I ſhall ſurely give the tenth to thee.* Here's the tenour and forme of the moſt ancient and famous vow that ever was made. Likewiſe *Hanna* (1 Sam. 1. 11.) *vowed a vow, and ſaid, O Lord of hoaſts, if thou wilt indeed looke on the affliction of thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid, but wilt give to thy handmaid a man-childe, then will I give him unto the Lord.* We reade often in the Pſalmes of paying of Vowes, *Pſ.* 66. 13. 14. *Pſ.* 50. 14. *Pſ.* 76. 11. *Pſal.* 116. 14. And we have the command for it (*Eccl.* 5. 4.) *Pay that which thou haſt vowed.*

Further, To explicate this Text, It may be inquired what a Vow is?

I anſwer, *A Vow is a ſolemne, free and voluntary promiſe made to God of things lawful, weighty, & poſſible, to further & help us to glorifie God in our obedience.* In which deſcription we have, firſt, the nature of a Vow, *It is a ſolemne promiſe, not a bare promiſe.* Secondly the object; *It muſt be made to God*; Thirdly, the manner of it, *It is a free and a voluntary promiſe*; for though a lawfull vow layeth a neceſſity upon us to keepe it, when once we have made it, yet there is not an antecedent neceſſity of compulſion upon us to make it, ſo that a vow ought to be a moſt free and voluntary act. Fourthly, in this deſcription of a vow, we have the generall matter of it. As firſt, it muſt be of things lawfull, we may not vow that which we may not doe, either expreſſely, as they did (*Acts* 23. 12. 13.) who vowed to kill *Paul*, or implicitly as *Herod* did who promiſed to give the daughter of *Herodias* whatſoever ſhe ſhould aſk, limiting her only as to the quantity of her demand, ſhe muſt not aske, above halfe the kingdom, but leaving her without limits, as to the quality of her demand, whether good or evill, lawfull or unlawfull made no matter. And thus many conceive *Jephtah* fayled, implicitly vowing to doe that, which was unlawfull for him to doe, (*Judg.* 11. 30, 31.) Secondly, a vow muſt be of things weighty and ſerious, we muſt not vow about trifles. Thirdly, it muſt be of things poſſible, through grace, though we muſt vow weighty things, yet we muſt not vow things impoſſible, either in their own nature, or without extraordinary aſſiſtance and ſtrength from God. Fifthly, we have here the ends of a vow; firſt, to Glorifie

rifie God; ſecondly, to oblidge us more ſtrictly to obedience.

Hence Note;

Firſt, *It is lawfull to make a Vow.*

All the Scripture teſtimonies before alledged confirm that propoſition.

Secondly, *Vowes lawfully made, ought to be kept.*

Thou ſhalt pay thy vowes. hath in it the nature both of a promiſe and of a command; Vowes are bonds, we muſt take heed of breaking them, if we breake our vowes, God will breake our peace. The word which we tranſlate *to pay a vow*, ſignifies alſo to give peace and quietneſs, implying that till the vow be paid we cannot have peace. A man that is in bonds to men hath no peace till he diſchargeth or hath prepared to diſcharge his debt, and therefore an acquittance or a diſcharge for a debt, is commonly called *A quietus eſt*, implying that till a man hath got a diſcharge, he is not at quiet. We are at our liberty whether we will vow or no, but we are not at our liberty whether we will pay our vowes or no. And therefore *Solomon* doth not only exhort to the payment of vowes, but to the ſpeedy payment of them (*Eccl.* 5. 4.) *When thou voweſt a vow unto God defarre not to pay it, for he hath no pleaſure in fooles*; That is, he is greatly diſpleaſed with fools, he means it not of ſuch as are called fools for the want of a naturall underſtanding but for the want of a good conſcience, and ſuch are all they, who ſtirre God with their haſtineſs in making vowes, and then mock him by their ſlownеſſe in or neglect of paying them. And therefore, take theſe Cautions about Vowes.

Firſt, Be not frequent in making vowes; vowing muſt not be like praying, *an every days work*, we may not vow as we muſt pray alwayes, and without ceaſing. Many have brought themſelves into great ſnares by multiplying vowes; and we have need to be caution'd in this thing, becauſe the nature of man is carryed much to it. The Heathens made many vowes eſpecially when they were in any diſtreſſe, and ſo meer carnall men will doe to this day, vow great things, what they will be, and what they will do, if trouble be upon them. It is ſaid that thoſe Heathen Mariners made vowes when the ſtorme was over and the danger paſt (*Jon.* 1. 16.) Many make vowes in a ſtorm whether at Sea or Land, which they little minde

minde when the ſtorme is done. But thoſe Heathens (which may be a rebuke to ſome Chriſtians) made vowes of praiſe and thankfulneſſe when they had eſcaped the ſtorme. And this is a further proofe of that naturalnes which is in man to make vows. And the reaſon of it is, becauſe this ſatisfieth a naturall man, and fills him with confidence that he ſhall receive good from God, becauſe he hath vowed duty to him. Man loves to be upon his own bottome, and thinks he ſhall ſurely engage God to be mercifull, while himſelfe promiſeth to be dutifull and thankfull. Now (I ſay) though there be ſtill a lawfulneſſe of vows in theſe Goſpel times, yet take heed of making many vowes, eſpecially of conceiting to oblidge God by any of them. As the former may prove a ſnare, and an entanglement to us, ſo the latter is a diſhonour to God, who never ſhewes us mercy more freely, then when we binde our ſelves moſt to duty.

Secondly, *When ever you vow be ſure you doe it in the ſtrength of Chriſt.* None diſcover more weakneſſe in keeping vowes, then they who make vowes in their own ſtrength, or not wholly in the ſtrength of Chriſt. Some have vowed never to commit ſuch a ſin more, and they never committed it ſo much as after they had vowed. Some have thought to get cure and remedy againſt ſuch a corruption or luſt by a vow, and yet that luſt or corruption hath prevailed more upon them after their vow. The reaſon of all is, becauſe they have either put their vow in the roome of Chriſt, as if that could help them alone, or elſe they have made their vowes alone, without relyance upon the power of Chriſt. That rule of the Apoſtle which obtains in all caſes of duty, doth moſt in this; *Whatſoever ye doe in word or deed, doe all in the name of the Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him* (Coloſſians 3. 17.)

Thirdly, In things wch are directly commanded or directly forbidden in the law of God, we are not to vow the doing or not doing of the thing in it ſelf, but only a greater care & ſtricter watch over our ſelves, either for the doing of the one, or not to doe the other. As for example, we ſhould not vow abſolutely, that we will not worſhip Idols, that we will not ſwear, that we will keep the Sabbath, that we will honour our parents, that we will do no murder, for all theſe duties are expreſſely commanded by God, and are therefore paſt being vowed by us. Onely thus, we (obſerving

ſerving the treachery of our own hearts) may vow more care and diligence in and about all theſe things. And thus we are to underſtand that of *Jacob* (Gen. 28. 21) vowing *that the Lord ſhould be his God*, as alſo that of *David* (Pſal. 119. 106.) *I have ſworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* David kept them before, but now he would be more ſtrict then before in keeping them. So then, when we vow things already commanded or forbidden, we muſt pitch and place our vow not upon the matter of the commandement, but upon the manner and intenſeneſſe of our ſpirits in keeping it.

Fourthly, Let not vowes about indifferent things be perpetuall. All vowes about things expreſſed in the Law of God muſt be perpetuall, becauſe the things themſelves are alwayes a duty. For the affirmative precepts of the Law are at all times binding, and the negative binde at all times. But as for things which are not preciſely under a Law; As for example, in the affirmative to pray ſo many times in a day, to reade ſo many Chapters of the holy Scriptures in a day, to heare ſo many Sermons in a week; and in the negative, not to drinke any wine or ſtrong drinke: not to weare ſilke or lace for or upon our Apparrel, not to take ſuch or ſuch a recreation in it ſelfe lawfull. I ſay in theſe caſes, let not vowes be perpetuall but limited to a ſeaſon, leſt thereby we entangle our own ſoules, and caſt our ſelves into temptation, while (through a zeal not according to knowledge) we uſe ſuch means to avoid it. Make no vowes to binde your ſelves at all times in things which are not neceſſary at all times, either to be done or not to be done.

From the whole verſe, Obſerve:

That, *the anſwer of prayer received from the Lord, doth call us to pay and performe all the duties that we have promiſed or vowed to the Lord in prayer.*

Though we doe not alwayes make ſtrict and formall vowes when we pray, yet every prayer hath ſomewhat of a vow in it, ſo that having prayed at any time, we may ſay, *The vowes of God are upon us*, for when we pray we promiſe, and then eſpecially we do ſo, when we pray under any preſſure of trouble, or when we have any extraordinary requeſt to make; then I ſay, we engage our ſelves in a more ſolemne manner to ſerve and walke with God.

And

And so the returne or answer of such prayers ingageth us more strongly to duty. For wheresoever the Lord soweth, there he lookes to reap, and where he hath sowed much, he looks to reap much; but then and there chiefly, when we promise him fruits of duty for our receipt, of favour and mercy. Did we take notice of this, we should not be found as we are so much in arreare to the Lord, either for our private or publique mercies? What promises have we made in the day of our distresse that we would be holy, that we would strive against and mortifie our sinnes, or the deeds of the body through the Spirit & power of our Lord Jesus Christ, Now let conscience speake; have we performed our promises? have we paid our vowes? we can hardly say that we have put up a prayer which hath not had an answer by our sighing and successes; God hath been to us a *prayer hearing God*, have we been to him a *vow-paying people*? Who amongst us is now more active for God? or more carefull to please him then before? Who amongst us is more watchful over his heart, or more circumspect in his walking then he was before? Who is more careful over his family, that it may be holy? or more zealous for the publicke, that it may be reformed, then was before? What manner of men should we be in all holy conversation & Godlinesse, did we but pay those vowes and make good those engagements which have gone out of our lips, and we have laid upon our selves before the Lord, in the day of our trouble? how just, how pure, how righteous a Nation should we be were we what we promised our utmost endeavours to be? the Lord hath done much for us; let us up and be doing for him; let us make good what we have spoken to the Lord in vowing and promising, seeing the Lord hath performed what we have spoken to him in praying and calling upon his name. God hath answered us at the first call, yea sometimes before we called; let us not put God to call a second and a third time, much lesse often and often for the payment of our vowes. For though the Lord in patience waite many dayes for the payment of vowes, yet according to righteousnes we should not let him wait one day for it. *All these spirituall debt-bills are payable at sight or upon demand*; God shews us our own bills and bonds wherein we stand engaged to his Majesty every day, and every day (by some or other of his Attorneyes, that is, by some meanes or other) he makes his demand, therefore pay to day, pay every day, for we can

can never come wholly out of these debts to God, or say, we owe him nothing, how much soever, we have paid him And know, that if when God hath heard us, we be slothfull in paying our vowes, either God will hear us no more, or we shall heare of him (and that, as we say, with both eares) till he make our eares tingle, and our hearts ake for not paying them Swift Judgements have often followed these slow payments. And though they have not been swift in coming presently upon the neglect, yet when they have come, they have come swiftly upon the neglecters. And as we may alwayes say of the evills and Judgements which come upon any of the people of God, as the Prophet in a like case doth to the people of *Israel* (Jer. 4 18.) *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee: this is thy wickednesse.* So in most cases when evills and judgements fall upon and afflict the people of God, we may say, *Your not doing what you have promised, hath procured these things unto you. This is your vow-breaking or your neglect of paying your vowes.* And how just is it that their troubles should not onely be renewed, but even doubled and trebled, yea, seaventimes more encreased upon them, who slight and throw off those very duties which they tooke upon them in the day of their trouble, in expectation to have their troubles removed Every mans mouth will be stopt, when he suffers for not doing that good which the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, how much more will his mouth be stopt, and he have nothing to say for himselfe, who suffers for not doing that good, or for not forbearing that evil, which his own mouth hath spoken, and solemnly charged upon himselfe as a duty in the presence of the Lord. They will have least to say for themselves who goe against or come not up to what themselves have said. Then *pay your vowes.*

JOB CHAP. 22. Vers. 28, 29, 30.

Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.

When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up: and he shall save the humble person.

He shall deliver the Island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hand.

IT hath appeared in opening the whole Context (of which this is a part) how *Eliphaz* presseth *Job* with promises, assuring him that not onely good, but great good should accrew to him by his returning to God, and acquainting himselfe with the Almighty. And in the foregoing verse. *That* great benefit was shewed, The Lords hearing the prayer of such as doe so; *Thou shalt make thy prayer to him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vowes:* Here *Eliphaz* gives in another excellent promise; *Thou shalt also*, &c. that is, moreover and beside what I have said, adde this,

Vers. 28. *Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.*

Thou shalt decree. The word here translated *to decree*, signifies properly to divide, to cut asunder. So it is used (1 *Kings* 3. 25.) when *Solomon* gave sentence between the *two women that were harlots* concerning the *living Childe*, he saith, *Divide the Childe*, my decree is that the Child shall be divided. Now hence by a Trope, the word signifies also to *decree*, to decide, or to determine a matter, because in all decrees about or determinations of a Controversie, there is (as it were) a Cutting off the businesse, a laying aside of one thing, and a sucking to another. When the whole matter is debated and weighed in Councel, then the result and issue of all is drawne up and given out in a decree. So that to decree is to divide, or separate one thing from another, resolving upon that, which we conceive most just and reasonable.

גזר *significat abscidit secuit dividit. Metaphorice decretum, definitivus decretum. Importat hoc verbum decretum cum quadam separatione unius ab altero.* Pagn. Vatab.

Thou

Thou shalt decree a thing.

The Hebrew is, *Thou shalt decree a word*; it is usuall in that language to put *word* for *thing*. And when he saith, *Thou shalt decree a thing*, we are not to understand it at large, as if whatsoever were decreed should be established, but the meaning is, thou shalt decree that which is right and good in it selfe, and good for thee. For the decree being made by a godly man, we cannot suppose that he should decree any thing but that which is just and good; and so the signification of the former word is well applyed to this, *Thou shalt decree*, that is, thou having by deliberation and serious discussion considered what is right, and having cut off all evill from thy sentence, thou decreeing such a thing, *it shall be established unto thee.*

V. Iunium & Tremellium & Piscatorem & alios.

There are yet two opinions concerning this decree, as it is an exposition of the former promise, *Thou shalt be heard*, and, *thou shalt pay thy vowes*; that is, what thou shalt pray for by prayer on earth, shall be decreed for thee in heaven. That is, thy prayer shall certainly be performed, thy prayers shall not be lost, no. They shall be as the Statutes and decrees of heaven. It is said of *Elijah* (1 *Kings* 17. 1.) that he decreed was done: and what was his decree? his decree was his prayer; See how he speaks as if he had the command of heaven and earth, as if he had carried the keyes of the Clouds at his girdle. *As the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor raine these yeares, but according to my word.* But what was this word of *Elijah*? the Apostle *James* expounds that for us, he telleth us what this word was, when *Elijah* said, *it shall be according to my word* (Jam. 5. 17.) *Elias was a man subject to the like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not raine, and it rained not on the earth, for the space of three yeares and six moneths: And he prayed again and the heavens gave raine, and the earth brought forth her fruit.* The Apostle explains, what the word of *Elijah* was, even a Prayer-word, he prayed and fought the Lord in that thing, and his prayer was as certainly performed to him, as if he had the whole power of decreeing what he would have. Thus here, thou shalt powre out a prayer, & thy prayer shall be as a decree established with God. So we read (*Gen.* 32. 24.) in the report of *Jacobs* wrestling with the Angel, that the word of *Jacob* was as a decree,

Thou shalt decernes, pacisceris, constituis, definis. Decernere dicitur qui rem aliquo modo confirmat, firmat, ratam facit. Vatab.

I will not let thee goe, except thou bleſſe me; I will have a bleſſing; and it is ſaid, *as a Prince haſt thou power with God, and with men, and haſt prevailed.* Jacob had what he would in prayer, he decreed a thing, and it was eſtabliſhed to him. *The prayers of Saints are decrees with God*: and 'tis but reaſon they ſhould be ſo; becauſe their prayers anſwer the decrees of God, or they pray for that which God hath decreed; and indeed there is no Saint, or Godly man would pray any other prayer, or aske any thing of God, but what God hath determined and decreed before to give: *As a Godly man would doe nothing but what God hath commanded, ſo he would aſk nothing but what God hath decreed.* This is a comfortable truth, yet I rather conceive the ſence of this place more generall, and not tyed up to that of prayer, and therefore

Secondly, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing*; that is, thou ſhalt take up a reſolve, or a purpoſe; thou in thy wiſdome and prudence ſhalt ſay in thy heart, I will do ſuch a thing, or I would bring ſuch a thing to paſſe, and it ſhall come to paſſe or be eſtabliſhed. For as many men met together in Councell, make Decrees ſo any man in himſelfe may make a decree; and we alwayes make decrees in our own minds before we joyne in any decree with others; firſt, we ſpeake in our minds, then we ſpeak out our minds; *Thou ſhalt decree a thing*, that is, thou ſhalt reſolve to goe ſuch a way, or to do ſuch a thing, and it ſhall be done. Now, this Caſe of decreeing muſt be underſtood with a Caution, ſuppoſe the thing it ſelfe be juſt and lawfull (as we touched before) yet a man muſt not make abſolute decrees, (that's the priviledge of God, he only can make peremptory decrees, who hath all things in his power) we muſt decree ſubmiſſively to the will of God, and ſay; *if the Lord will, if the Lord pleaſe* we will doe ſuch a thing. The Apoſtle (*James* 4. 12, 13, 14.) reproves thoſe that would make peremptory decrees of what they would do in reference to outward affaires: *Goe to now ye that ſay to day or to morrow we will goe into ſuch a Citie*, here is a decree, *we will go to ſuch a place, or doe ſuch a thing, we will continue there a yeare, and buy and ſell, and get gaine.* It is lawfull for men to take up a purpoſe to go to ſuch a place, and follow their trade to buy and ſell, and get gain in an honeſt way, but no man muſt be peremptory in this, becauſe we know not what ſhall be on the morrow; therefore, the Apoſtle directs; *Ye ought to ſay, if the Lord will we ſhall live, and do this or that.* Such decrees muſt be made with the Lords good leave, or with a reference to his pleaſure who alone doth whatſoever pleaſeth him. As the perſons ſo the workes of all men are in the hand of God (*Eccl.* 9. 1.) And there they are; firſt, as to the performance of them; ſecondly, as the ſucceſſe of them. They take themſelves for more then men, who decree the doing of lawfull things without the leave of God. We muſt not only ſee what we doe is according to the will of God, but we muſt have his good-will for the doing of it; that is, as we muſt have a Law from God for what we doe, ſo leave from God. Thus *Paul* teacheth us to ſpeake by his own example (*1 Cor.* 4. 19.) *I will come unto you ſhortly if the Lord will.* And againe (*Chap* 16. 7.) *I muſt tarry a while with you if the Lord permit.* Once more (*Phil.* 2. 19.) *I truſt in the Lord to ſend Timothy to you ſhortly.* And even Heathens themſelves by the light of nature have acknowledged ſuch a ſubmiſſion as due unto their ſuperiour Powers, *their gods*, therefore they uſed to expreſſe their reſolutions thus: *If the gods will* much more muſt Chriſtians ſpeake thus in all they undertake to doe, we will doe it, *if God will.*

Ordinabis per tuam cogitationem firmam, & ſtatuam ibi juſti, & quæ vere non fortuita ſunt & incerta, ſed juſta divina jam voluntate conſtituta illam habebis. Aquin.

Ethnicis illudi in ore frequens erat, ſi dij voluerint.

Thou ſhalt decree a thing

And it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee.

That is, thou ſhalt have ſucceſſe in it, it ſhall be confirm'd. The word in the Originall ſignifies to riſe up as alſo to ſtand. So ſome render it here, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall riſe up to thee.* When a thing that we are determined upon, proſpers and comes well on, we ſay it riſeth up to us, whereas a buſineſſe that failes, falls off from us, or goeth backward. But ſaith *Eliphaz* to *Job*, *The thing which thou decreeſt ſhall riſe or come up to thy minde, to thy deſire*, or as ſome read, *It ſhall come to thee* we ſay, *it ſhall be eſtabliſhed.* So the word is uſed frequently in Scripture (*Eſa.* 40. 8.) *The word of the Lord ſhall ſtand.* Now as the word of the Lord ſhall ſtand, ſo ſhall the word of man while it is according to the word of God. So the word is uſed in the Caſe of a virgins making a vow (*Numb.* 30 4.) *If the father heare it and ſay nothing it ſhall ſtand, or be confirm'd*; otherwiſe if he diſlike it, it is a void vow, a null vow. So that here, to riſe up, or to be eſtabliſhed, notes only the effectivenes and ſucceſs of thoſe decrees which this godly man ſhould make, theſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto him for his good,

יָקֻם *ſurget ſtabit ſe ſurgere pro ex ſtare vel effectum, dari.*

Veniet tibi. Vulg.

good, he ſhall have the comfort and benefit of them, while he aimes at the Glory of God in them.

Hence note;

First, *The ſucceſſe of our Councells and Decrees is a great mercy.*

Eliphaz brings it in by way of promiſe, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee.* Succeſs in any of our right actions is to be acknowledged as a mercy; & therefore the Lord doth ſo diſtinctly ſpecifie the ſucceſsleſnes of the *Jews* after their return from *Babylon* in their rural and houſhold buſineſſes for neglecting to build his houſe (*Hag.* 1. 6.) to ſhew that he had a Controverſie with them; *Ye have ſowne much, and brought in little* (no ſucceſſe) *yee eate, but have not enough, ye drinke but ye are not filled with drinke* (that is, ye are not ſatisfied) *ye cloath you, but there is no warmth* (which is the effect of cloathing) *and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.* Which is a proverbial ſpeech implying that nothing ſticks, nothing ſtayes by a man, no more then money doth in a bag that hath holes in it, or water in a ſieve, or in a leaking veſſell. Succeſsleſnes attended them in all they did, and that was their affliction. So when our Councells proſper, when what we advice to be done thrives in the doing, when the directing word of a man proves like the Creating word of God (*Gen. firſt*) who did but ſay, *Let there be light, and there was light, let there be a firmament, and there was a firmament, &c.* Thus when a man ſhall ſay, let ſuch a thing be done and it is done, when every things come forth at a word, like a new Creation, how great both a mercy and honour is this? When he ſaith, let there be deliverance, and there is deliverance, let there be victory, and there is victory, let there be peace, and there is peace; when in caſes of greateſt difficulty and utter impoſſibility to fleſh and bloud, he ſpeaks like magnanimous *Joſhua* (Joſh. 10. 13.) in a commanding language to the creature, while with ſtrongeſt confidence in and humbleſt dependance upon God, *Sun ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeah & thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon, & the Sun ſtood ſtill, and the Moone ſtayed untill the people had avenged themſelves upon their enemies.* Who of the ſons of men (who were not alſo the ſons of God) were ever crowned with ſuch an honour?

Secondly, He doth not ſay, he ſhall decree a thing and eſtabliſh it, for man may decree a thing, but man cannot eſtabliſh it; the

the decree is from one, the eſtabliſhment is from another; and who is that other? *Eliphaz* doth not expreſſe who by name, but we may eaſily underſtand who it is, even God himſelfe. For as it is God alone who hath given a being to all things, ſo he alone gives all things their eſtabliſhment, whether they be things wrought by him, or wrought by us, *God ſhall eſtabliſh it*, or *it ſhall be eſtabliſhed by the fiat, and conſent of God.*

Hence obſerve;

The ſucceſſe of our Councells and decrees is from God.

There are many who take wiſe, yea honeſt Councels, which yet are not eſtabliſhed, becauſe the Lord is not pleaſed to eſtabliſh them, and the Lord doth often overthrow evill and malitious Counſels, We read (*Eſay* 7. 5, 6, 7.) of Councells and Decrees made; *Syria, Ephraim, and the ſon of Remaliah, have taken evill Councell againſt thee, ſaying* (they decree a thing what was it) *let us goe up againſt Judah to vex it* (there was the decree) *let us make a breach therein for us, and ſet a King in the midſt of it, even the Son of Tabeal.* Here was their decree; we will vex this people, we will ſet a king among them, the Son of *Tabeal.* But what ſaith the Lord to this? *Thus ſaith the Lord God* (7 ver.) *it ſhall not ſtand, neither ſhall it come to paſſe.* It is this word in the Text, *it ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.* You have made a decree, but you have not my conſent for the Eſtabliſhment of it, and therefore it ſhall not ſtand, it ſhall not come to paſſe. Take another Scripture (*Eſay* 8. 10) The Lord doth as it were give them leave to make decrees: make as many decrees as you will, and ſit together in Councell, lay your Councells as deep as you can, *take Councell together, and it ſhall come to nought* (you may take Councell, but it is in my Power whether it ſhall ſucceed or no, and I have decreed concerning your decree, that it ſhall come to nought) *ſpeak the word and it ſhall not ſtand.* The ſtanding or not ſtanding, the fruſtrating or the fulfilling of our Decrees and Councells, it is from the Lord.

Thirdly, When he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee.* We may obſerve,

The Councells of the Godly are under a promiſe of good ſucceſſe.

They have a kind of Aſſurance that what they ſay ſhall come to

to paſſe; though they have not an abſolute Aſſurance, yet they have much aſſurance, though we cannot ſay in every particular caſe that their decree ſhall be Eſtabliſhed to them, yet their decrees in generall are under a promiſe of Eſtabliſhment. Chriſt ſpeaketh concerning the Decrees of a Church-Aſſembly (*Matth.* 18. 18.) *Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven*; that is, I will Eſtabliſh your Decrees. For when you meet together in my name, you decree concerning a perſon to bind ſin upon him, he ſhall be bound, if to looſe or pronounce him pardon'd, he ſhall be looſened, your decree on earth, ſhall be a decree in heaven, I will bind what you binde, and looſe what you looſe. Now in proportion, the Lord ſpeaks the ſame concerning the decrees of any Godly man what he bind on earth, the Lord doth bind in heaven, and what he looſeth on earth, God looſeth in heaven; that is, there is an Eſtabliſhment of his decrees; and as the Church there hath a promiſe that the Lord will joyne with her in her decrees, ſo a Godly man hath a promiſe here that the Lord will joyne with him in his decrees. We have alſo an excellent confirmation of it, (*Eſa.* 44. 25, 26.) The Lord is many ways deſcribed in Scripture, but here he is deſcribed by diſappointing and eſtabliſhing the Councells of men. *He it is that fruſtrateth the tokens of the lyars, and maketh diviners mad that turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledge fooliſhneſs.* Here is a deſcription of God in reference to the diſappointments which he puts upon his enemies, in fruſtrating their Councells and decrees; they boaſt of theſe and theſe tokens that aſſure them of good ſucceſſe, but the Lord fruſtrates their tokens. The Diviners ſay, O the Starrs promiſe good luck, and tell us we ſhall have good fortune; thus diviners boaſt, but the Lord *maketh the diviners mad*; how doth he make them mad? by making them ſee things fall out quite croſſe to what they have foretold or propheſied. Againe, *he turnes wiſe men backward*; that is, he turns the Councells of wiſe men backward, when they have reſolved ſuch a thing, the Lord ſets it quite another way: this is the glory of God that he can give check to the Councels of the greateſt Politicians, and deepeſt Machiavells, he turnes them backward. Thus the Lord is ſet forth overthrowing the decrees of the wicked; but at the 26th *ver.* He is ſet forth eſtabliſhing the decrees of the Godly.

He

He it is *that confirmeth the word of his ſervant, and performeth the Councell of his Meſſengers; that ſaith to Jeruſalem, thou ſhalt be Inhabited, and to the Cities of Judah yee ſhall be built*, &c. God *confirmeth the word of his ſervant*; which may be underſtood not only of the word of Propheſie (though that be the ſcope of that place, as if it had been ſaid, when the Lord ſendeth forth his Prophets and holy Diviners, 'tis not with them as with falſe Prophets and heatheniſh Diviners, who making promiſes from the Starres of heaven, not from the God of heaven, are fruſtrated and diſappointed; 'tis not thus with the *Lords holy Diviners*, for *he confirmeth the word of his Servants*. Now, I ſay, we may underſtand that Text not only of that word of prophecy which the Lord puts into the mouths of his Servants by an immediate inſpiration) but alſo of that word of prophecy, or decree, which any one of his faithfull ſervants ſpeaketh or maketh according to his already revealed will. This word of his ſervants the Lord confirmeth alſo, and *performeth the Councell of his Meſſengers*. And the reaſon is (as was touched before about prayer) becauſe there is a ſuitableneſſe between ſuch words and decrees of his ſervants, and his own Decrees; for the deſignes of his ſervants falling in with his own deſignes, and ſo their decrees with his decrees, he in eſtabliſhing their decrees, doth indeed but eſtabliſh his own. For the ſervants of God deſiring that their decrees may be ſuitable to the written or revealed will of God, they ſeldome miſſe of a ſuitableneſſe to the decrees of his hidden and ſecret will. So that their decrees are (as it were) the *Duplicate* or *Counterpane of the Decrees of God*; and therefore no wonder if they be under ſuch a promiſe of ſucceſſe and eſtabliſhment. The Lord ſaith concerning his own Decrees or thoughts; *Surely as I have thought, ſo ſhall it come to paſſe* (*Iſa.* 14. 24.) (Now if we thinke as God thinketh, then what we thinke ſhall come to paſſe too) *and as I have purpoſed ſo ſhall it ſtand*; If we purpoſe as God purpoſeth, then our purpoſes ſhall ſtand too. Againe (*Eſay* 46. 10) *I am the Lord and there is none elſe, I am God, and there is none like me: declaring the End from the beginning, and from ancient time the things that are not yet done, ſaying, my Councell ſhall ſtand, and I will doe all my pleaſure*. If then the Councells of Saints, be the Councells of God, he will doe all their pleaſure. That's the ſumme of this promiſe to Job; *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto*

thee. Which appeares further from the last clause.

And the light shall shine upon thy wayes.

Eliphaz in this promise might possibly have respect to *Jobs* former complaint (*Chap.* 19. 8.) *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot passe; and he hath set darknesse in my pathes.* As if *Eliphaz* had here said, thou didst Complaine a while agoe that God set darknesse in thy pathes, doe thou returne unto the Lord, *and the light shall shine upon thy wayes*, or there shall be light in stead of darknesse in thy pathes. This light may be taken three wayes.

First, A light of direction, thou shalt see what to doe; So it answers the former promise, *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.* Thou shalt not make blind decrees, or decrees in the darke, thou shalt not decree at a venture, or at random; the light shall shine upon thy wayes; thou shalt have the light of the Word, and the light of the Spirit to direct thee in making thy decrees, and for the ordering of thy whole conversation.

Secondly, Light shining upon his wayes, is the prosperity of his wayes, as if he had said, successe shall attend thy undertakings, the favour of God and his blessing shall be upon what thou takest in hand; as the Sun shining upon the earth ripens the fruits thereof, so the light, heat, and influence of divine favour shall ripen thy undertakings and bring them to a desired perfection. Light, in Scripture, is often put for prosperity, as hath been shewed from other passages of this booke.

Thirdly, *The light shall shine upon thy wayes*; that is, thou shalt have personall comfort and contentment in thy wayes; that's a different blessing from the former; 'tis possible for a man to be in a prosperous way, and yet himselfe to take no comfort nor Contentment in it. When these three lights shine upon any man in his way, or upon the wayes of any man, when the Lord shewes him what he should do, when he prospereth & succeeds what he doth, and when he hath comfort & joy in what he is doing or hath don, then the blessing is full. As the Lord *meets him that rejoyceth in his way and worketh righteousnesse*, so the Lord doth often meet those that worke righteousnesse in their way, causing them to rejoyce; And then the light shines upon their way indeed. This is a further addition unto the promise of successe before given. From

From the first notion of light, first Observe;

The righteous are under a promise of direction and guidance by God, they shall see their way, and know what to doe, by a divine light.

The steps of a Good man are ordered by the Lord (Psal. 73. 23.) That is, the Lord gives him light to see how to order his steps, He hath not only an outward naturall light shining in the ayre, and an outward spirituall light shining in the rule, but he hath an inward spirituall light shining in his heart, or that outward rule planted within, as it follows at the 31. verse of the same *Psalm*, *The law of his God is in his heart, and none of his steps shall slide*: The law in the heart is a rule within, which directs the good man what to doe, and gives him such good direction, that *none of his steps shall slide.* He shall not walke like a man upon glasse or ice, all whose steps are slips, or in danger of sliding, but he shall walk like a man upon plaine firme ground, whose very steps are as sure as standings. As Saints who were darknesse are made light in the Lord, in reference to their state, so they have light from the Lord, in reference to their walkings; and as they receive a light from God whereby they know all things, that is, those great things which concerne eternal life, (*1 John* 2. 20.) *Ye have an Unction from the holy one, and ye know all things.* Now as they have a light promised them, that they may know all things, that is, all necessary saving truths, or doctrines of salvation for attaining the next life, so a light is promised them whereby they may do all things; that is, all their necessary works, businesses, and affaires, which concerne their duty in this life.

From the second notion of light, Observe;

Righteous men, such as turne unto the Lord, shall have a blessing in their way, their way shall prosper.

As they shall have a light shining to shew them their way, so to prosper them in their way: God is a Sunne, and he is a Shield, (*Ps.* 84. 11.) And as he is a Sunne to give light, and a Shield to protect, so, *no good thing will he withhold from them that walke uprightly*. That is, he will not hinder or stop those good things from them which their souls desire, or move after, they shall prosper in their way, yea, when 'tis said, *He will not withhold*, &c.

there is more intended then expreſſed, for the meaning is, he will plentifully give forth or powre out all good things to and upon them *who walk uprightly.*

From the third notion of light, learne:

That the Lord gives godly men Joy and Comfort in their way.

Though their way be a way of much labour, yea and a way of much danger too, though it prove a way full of ſweat & trouble, yet the Lord will cauſe a light to ſhine upon them, and refreſh them in their way. *To the righteous there riſeth up light in darkneſſe.* The light of joy in the darknes of ſorrow, the light of comfort in the darkneſſe of trouble; They who walk in the light of truth and holineſſe, uſually finde the light of joy and comfort in their way, and are ſure to finde it in their end. *The wayes of wiſdome* (ſaith *Solomon*, Pro. 3. 17.) *are wayes of pleaſantneſſe, and all her pathes are peace*; and if at any time her wayes and pathes are not peace and pleaſantneſſe (as to the outward man they often are not) while we are travelling in them, yet they are alwayes ſo in the cloſe of our travells. (*Pſal.* 37. 37.) *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* Yea when others finde moſt trouble in their way, then God is neereſt to him for ſupport, as it followes in the next words.

Verſ. 29. *When men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up, and he ſhall ſave the humble perſon.*

In this and the following verſe, *Eliphaz* gives a firm aſſurance to *Job* by way of promiſe, that he ſhould not onely be delivered, but ſhould have two further priviledges.

Firſt, That himſelfe ſhould be exalted when others were caſt downe, or that he ſhould be ſaved in times of common calamity, *ver.* 29.

Secondly, That he ſhould be a meanes of ſafety to others, and ſhould prevaile with God for their deliverance: *he ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent*, &c. verſ. 30. That's the generall ſcope of theſe two verſes, according to our tranſlation; as will further appeare in the explication of them.

שפל *depreſſus proſtratus.*

Verſ. 29. *When men are caſt downe.*

When they are preſt, or oppreſt with mountains of affliction and

and trouble. So the word is uſed (*Eſa.* 2. 17.) *The loftineſſe of man ſhall be bowed down*; that is, the lofty man ſhall be bowed downe, as a man with a heavy burden upon his backe. We ſay, *when men are caſt down*, the word, *men*, is not expreſt in the Hebrew text, 'tis there onely, *when caſt down*: and becauſe that word is not expreſt, therefore ſome ſupply out of the former clauſe, the word, *way*, *The light ſhall ſhine upon thy way when it*, that is, *when thy way is caſt down*; though thou be now in a low condition, and though thou ſhouldeſt hereafter be caſt into a low condition againe, yet *thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*, or, thou ſhalt be lifted up. If at any time thy wayes be caſt down in darkneſſe, the light ſhall ſhine upon them, thou ſhalt ſay in faith, *there is a lifting up.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks (in a language like this) of himſelfe and of his fellow Apoſtles (2 *Cor.* 4. 8.) *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; perplexed, but not in deſpair, perſecuted but not forſaken, caſt downe, but not deſtroyed.* Thus here, *when there is a caſting downe*, or, *when thy wayes are caſt downe yet thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*; Thou mayeſt be caſt down, but not deſtroyed. Yet, I conceive, that Suplement of the word *men*, which we put into the Text, is more ſuitable to the ſcope of it, & then the ſence is this, *When men are caſt down*, that is, when ſinners or ungodly men are caſt downe, when God comes to ruine his enemies, and make them deſolate, *then thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up.* A lifting up for me, and for ſuch as I am.

Cum humiliatæ fuerint viæ tuæ deorſum, elatiſſimi eſſe, i. e. optimas tentes conditionem tuã ex mea ſententia optimã. Omnium enim in ijs eſſe, idea eſſe melioratur. Merc.

Thou ſhalt ſay

This ſaying may be taken two wayes, and in both 'tis the voice of faith.

Firſt, *Thou ſhalt ſay* in prayer, or thou ſhalt pray, *O Lord, let there be a lifting up.* Thus it is expounded as a promiſe to *Job*, that when others were caſt down, he ſhould helpe them up again by prayer, thou ſhalt ſay, *There is a lifting up, or, O Lord let there be a lifting up, namely, of him who is caſt down, lift him up O Lord.* As prayer is in its owne nature a lifting up of the ſoule to God (*Pſal.* 25. 1.) ſo prayer in the effect of it hath a mighty power and prevalency with God for the lifting up both of our own bodyes and outward eſtates, as alſo the bodyes and outward eſtates of others out of the deeps of miſery and trouble. Many a Godly man hath lifted himſelfe and others out of the mire by prayer, while

Dices, ſc: in tuis ad deum precibus exaltatio ſit. ſc. illi depreſſo. i. e. exaltabitillum Deus. Pelear.

while seeing a casting downe, he hath said, *There is a lifting up, or, O Lord, let there be a lifting up.* This sence carrieth a high priviledge; but I rather conceive that intended in the next verse. And therefore

Secondly, I shall take these words of *Eliphaz* as a promise, *When men are cast down, thou shalt say,* (or confidently affirm this thing) *there is a lifting up*: that is, I promise or assure thee O *Job*, that when thou shalt see the Lord bringing vengeance upon the wicked, when thou seest them fall on this side, and on that, when nothing is visible but the ruine and destruction of men and families, yea of Nations, that even then thou shalt say, *there is a lifting up*, that is, thou shalt have faith for thy self, that both thou and thine shall be lifted up, or saved and delivered in a time when many wicked men or thine enemies fall and perish, and shall never (as to any worldly enjoyment) rise any more.

Pollicetur Jobo Eliphaz eximiam felicitatem in impijs aliisque, etiam hostibus suis ad extremum in felicitatis gradum præcipitatis.

Hence observe;

That a godly man may have much assurance when others are cast down, that yet he and others shall be preserved and lifted up.

When men are cast downe in *Sodome*, when *Sodome* was overthrown, *Lot* was lifted up, and assured of his preservation, When all the men in the world were overwhelm'd and swept off the face of the earth with a Deluge, there was a lifting up for *Noah* and his family, he and his were safely housed in the Ark floating upon the waters. Thus the Lord had made provision for the preservation of his people, when thousands have been undone and cast down on the right hand and on the left by common calamities; yea when they have been cast down, his people have been not only preserved, but exalted and lifted up. *Thou shalt say there is a lifting up,*

And he shall save the humble person.

That is, the Lord shall save him, the vulgar reads thus; *He that is humble shall be in glory.* The Seaventy thus; *Because thou hast humbled thy selfe thou shalt be saved.*

ὅτι ἐταπείνωσας σεαυτὸν. Sept.

But I shall keepe to our reading; *he shall save the humble person* (or according to the strictnes of the Hebrew) *He shall save him that is low of eyes*, 'tis frequent in Scripture to expresse an humble person in this forme; *A man that hath low eyes*; as *high looks and lofty eyes*, are every where in Scripture the periphrasis of pride.

Interior animi fastus & tumor per oculos et per omnes externos gestus se prodit.

David

David said (*Psal.* 101. 5) *him that hath an high looke and a proud heart will I not suffer*; for you may see pride in the eye, pride sits upon the eye, therefore *David* puts a high looke and a proud heart both together there. And againe (*Psal.* 131. 1.) *Lord mine heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty.* So that I say an humble person, and a person of low eyes is the same, as a proud person, and a person of lofty eyes is the same in Scripture sence, and both are very significant Expressions; *He shall save the humble person*, this humble person, may be taken two wayes, either passively, or actively.

Non enim is superbia mos est, qui latere aut dissimulari possit. Pined.

Passively, so 'tis he that is cast down and laid low by affliction. Thus the humble person is the same with the humbled person; affliction is an humiliation, however the afflicted take it or carry it; and usually it makes men humble, at least in appearance and lowly in their looks, whereas in prosperity men lift up their eyes usually and look loftily, as if they would reach heaven with their heads, while their hearts are farre from it. But affliction makes men stoope. We may understand the Text of a person who is humble when humbled, who stoops down quietly to take up and bear his crosse, and doth not in stoutnesse slight it, or in wantonnesse play with it, but is serious under the rebukes of God; *He shall save the humble person.*

Non tam modestum quid sibi submittit (ut vocabulum significet) intellige, quam afflictionem: eum illud etiam sensibus non repugnat, imo utrumque esse interpretaris? Merc.

Secondly, It may be taken actively, *He shall save the humble person*, that is, the person who is low in his own eyes, while in the greatest worldly heights, the person that humbles himselfe, and walkes humbly with God and men when most exalted. Thus the Apostle *James* exhorts the brother of high degree, or the rich brother *to rejoyce in that he is made low* (Jam. 1. 10.) But if he be rich, how is he made low? he means it not of a lowness in state, but of a lowneſse or rather lowlinesse of spirit. The brother of high degree hath no cause to rejoyce in his highnesse, but when he is low in his own eyes. Lowness of eyes is more then a vertue or common modesty, 'tis a Grace; That's in a spirituall sence, the most Grace full looke, which is the most humble look. *He shall save the humble person.* But with what salvation? I answer; Salvation is either temporall and bodily or eternall, usually called the salvation of the soule. We may expound this Text of both; The Lord saveth the humble person both body and soul, both temporally and eternally.

Dimissus oculis est, qui suo indicio de se statuit, nihil sibi ipse tribuit.

Where

Where note;

That the Lord takes ſpeciall care of humble ones.

The Lord ſeems to take ſo much care to ſave the humble, as if there were none elſe that he took care to ſave, or regarded what became of them, whether ſaved or no. And the Lord ſpeakes of proud perſons as if he contemn'd none but under that name and notion. (*Jam.* 4. 6.) *He reſiſteth the proud*; he that is proud of his perſon, or parts, or eſtate, or wit, or power, the Lord reſiſteth him. And he ſpeaks of the humble as if none were ſaved but under that name and notion, *He ſaves the humble perſon*, or as that Text in *James* hath it, *He giveth grace to the humble*. What grace? There is a twofold grace; and both are given to the humble; Firſt, he gives them the grace of favour or good will, he is kind to and reſpecteth the humble, or (as this text in *Job* hath it) *He ſaves the humble perſon*. Secondly, He gives much grace to the humble, as grace is taken for that gracious worke of the Spirit in us, forming up faith, love, &c. in our ſoules. The Lord gives more of this grace alſo to the humble, that is, he addeth unto the graces which they have, and makes them more humble, more gracious; a man cannot be (in that ſence) an humble perſon without grace; humility it ſelfe is a great grace, and the greater our humility is, the greater acceſſion we have of other graces. Thus, I ſay, we may underſtand the text in *James* both waves; *He giveth grace to the humble*, that is, he favours and reſpects them, becauſe they are gracious, and he addeth to or increaſeth their graces. We have a promiſe very paralel to theſe of *Eliphaz* and *James* (Pſal. 18. 27.) *Thou wilt ſave the afflicted people, but wilt bring down high looks.* The word which we tranſlate *afflicted*, ſignifies alſo one humbled, and humble, and ſo we might render the *Pſalm*; *Thou ſhalt ſave the humbled or the humble people*; and that the humble are to be taken in to partake of the priviledge of that promiſe, is plain from the oppoſite Terme in the latter clauſe of the verſe; *High looks*; that is, *high lookers God will bring downe, but he will ſave the humble perſon*. Men of low and mean eſtates are uſually wrapt up with great ones in the ſame judgement, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Eſay* 5. 15.) *The mean man ſhall be brought down, and the mighty man ſhall be humbled, the eyes of the lofty ſhall be humbled*; there we have the mean man and the mighty man under the ſame wrathfull

full diſpenſations of God. The wicked whether high or low, are farre from ſalvation, but God knowes how to make a diſtinction between the humble and the proud, when his wrath makes the greateſt confuſions in the world. *Humility it is not only a ſweet, but a ſafe grace, yea a ſaving Grace; we never goe under the Covert of God ſo much as when we walk humbly with God. He will ſave the humble perſon.*

Verſ. 30. *He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent, and it is deliver'd by the pureneſs of thine hands.*

The promiſe is continued to the man that returns to God, *He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the innocent*; or as ſome tranſlate, *the Innocent ſhall deliver the Iſland*. The ſence is the ſame; *He ſhall deliver the Iſland*, that is, the Inhabitants of the Iſland. All ſhall be ſafee, the Iſland and they that dwell in it. There is another reading of the Text, which yet falls in fully and clearly with this; whereas we read, *He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent*, it may be read. *He ſhall deliver him that is not Innocent*. Now becauſe this may ſeeme a very wide difference in the tranſlation, we are to Conſider the ground of it, how this can be made out, that the ſame text ſhould be rendred, *the Innocent, and him that is not Innocent*? The reaſon is becauſe the word which we tranſlate, *Iſland*, is taken by many of the Hebrew Doctors, as alſo by other trauſlators, onely for a negative particle, ſignifying *not* or that which is *not*. So the word is rendred (1 *Sam.* 4 21.) when *Phineas* his wife dying in travell gave the name to her Childe, ſhe ſaid, *He ſhall be called Ichabod, There is no glory*, or, *not glory*. And again, (*Pro.* 31. 4.) The word is uſed in the ſame ſence; *It is not for Kings O Lemuel, to drinke wine; ſtrong drinke is not for Princes.* So here, *Thou ſhalt deliver the nocent, or the not Innocent*. And ſo the whole verſe is thus tranſlated; *God, becauſe of or for the pureneſs of thy hands, will deliver the nocent, or thoſe who are not innocent*. Whereas we ſay, *Thou ſhalt deliver the Iſland of the Innocent*, or *the Innocent ſhall deliver the Iſland*.

Liberabit noxium. Piſc.

Vocula ל *quæ hic redditur inſula, eadem valet quod* לא *non.* Piſc.

Ego eſt veterinus לא *pro negatione exponere. Enitiſ facilis ſenſum, ſc. deus purificate manum tuarum etiam nocentiũ, vel non innocentem liberabit.* Merc.

And it is delivered by the pureneſs of thine hands.

Eliphaz ſpake before in the third perſon, here in the ſecond; 'tis probable he did ſo purpoſely to make *Job* underſtand that he

meant him. *It is delivered*, &c. That is, the Island is deliver'd, according to our translation; how is it delivered? *by the purenes of thine hands.* The word notes the most exact purity and cleannes, like that of gold when it is refined in the fire, or of garments that are washed with Soape or Nitre; *by this purenes it or the Island shall be deliver'd*: and by the *purenes of his hands*, he means the purenes of his actions or administrations. The hand is the instrument of action, and pure or cleane hands in Scripture are put for the purity or cleannesse of our actions or conversation. While our doings are holy, our works righteous, just, and good, it may be said our hands are pure. And we may referre this especially to prayer; *Thou shalt deliver the Island of the Innocent, and it is delivered by the purenes of thine hands*; That is, thou praying in the purity of thy hands, or with pure hands, shalt deliver the Island of the innocent, or (according to that other reading) those that are not innocent. And then, purenes of hands, or *pure hands*, are put as a sign for the thing signified, the gesture, for that which is done in that gesture. The lifting up of hands is a gesture in prayer, and the lifting up of pure hands, notes the purity of prayer. (1 *Tim.* 2. 8.) *I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy or pure hands.* Now because 'tis usuall in prayer to lift up the hands; and in prayer no hands but morrally pure or holy hands should be lifted up (and so theirs are in Scripture sence whose lives are holy) therefore we may well conceive, that when he saith, *it shall be deliver'd by the purenes of thy hands*, his meaning is this, it shall be delivered by holy prayer, or when thou prayest holily, it shall be delivered. Thus *Eliphaz* doth not onely promise *Job*, that himself in person should be lifted up and saved when others are cast down, but that he should be a meanes of saving and delivering others, and those not some few, or all his own family, but that the whole Nation or Island in Generall should escape and fare the better for him. *It shall be delivered by the purenes of thy hands.* Learne hence, this Great and famous Truth;

Manus puræ sunt opera inculpata & quæ crimine vacant. Drus.

That, a Godly Person is a Common good.

He doth good not onely within his owne walls, or to his own personall relations, but he is a Common good, a publique mercy, a generall Blessing, whether we Consider generall Blessings either negatively, or affirmatively, that is, either as delivering from

from evill, or as bringing in of good, every way the Godly man is a generall blessing, he shall deliver the Island of the Innocent, yea those that are not Innocent; the Lord will accept his prayer, and hear his request for the deliverance of a place, though there be many wicked ones in it. *Abraham* (Gen. 18. 32.) had that priviledge granted him, that for his sake and at his suite the Lord would have spared the wicked, the not Innocent, those who were most abominably poluted: if there had been but ten righteous persons there, *Sodome* had been saved from burning at the suit of *Abraham*. Much more wil the Lord spare the Island of the Innocent, that is, where there a great many Innocent ones, at the prayer and request of an *Abraham*, a man Eminent in faith and holinesse. How often did *Moses* turne away the wrath of God, when it was breaking forth against the people of *Israel* (Psal. 106. 23.) *He said he would destroy them*, (that is, the Lord said it) *had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turne away his wrath lest he should destroy them.* The Lord had as it were made a decree that he would destroy that people; but *Moses* comes and Interposeth for them, and the Lord spared them. We read (*Exod.* 32. 9, 10.) that how the Lord said to *Moses*, *I have seene this people, and behold it is a stiffe-necked people; Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may waxe hot against them, and that I may consume them, and I will make of thee a great people*; But did *Moses* accept this offer of advancement upon the ruines of that people? No, he deprecates his owne honour, as it follows (*ver.* 11th) *And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord why doth thy wrath wax hot against this people*, &c? Then at the 14th ver. *The Lord repented of the evill which he thought to doe unto his people.* Thus *Moses* by the purenes of his hands, holy prayer delivered a Nation that was not innocent, from consumption in the flames of the Lords provoked Jelousie. Again (*Jere.* 5. 1.) the Prophet is Commanded *to run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, to see and know in the broad places thereof, if he could finde a man, if there were any that executed judgement, that sought the truth, and I will pardon, saith the Lord.* One man should deliver the City that was not Innocent by the purenes of his hands. We see the Lord puts the whole issue upon this, *if thou canst finde a man.* But were there not multitudes and throngs of men in *Jerusalem*? Why then was it proposed as a matter of difficulty to find

finde a man there? Doubtlesse *Jerusalem* was a populous City and was filled with men, but a man so qualified, a man of Justice, a man that sought the truth was hardly to be found there, and therefore *if thou canst finde* (such) *a man, I will pardon it saith the Lord.* How pardon it? There is a twofold pardon: first, a pardon of the guilt of sinne; secondly a pardon of the punishment of sin. The Lord, upon the finding out of such a man, would not pardon the guilt of all that were there, nor give them an everlasting pardon, but pardoned they should be as to present punishment and ruine, they should be pardoned or saved from destruction for that time, if such a godly man could be found among them. Godly men save the wicked three wayes.

First, They save them, when by their good Councell and Instruction they turne them from their sins, and bring them to repentance; this is a happy way of saving them. And thus a godly man may save the wicked, every godly Minister of the Gospel is said to save not himselfe onely, (but in this sence) those that hear him; because he offers and urgeth upon them the means of salvation (1 *Tim.* 4. 16.)

Secondly, As they may save them thus by being a meanes of their Conversion, so they may save them by being a meanes of their Direction; One godly man may save a whole Land by his directing Councell, as well as he saveth many by his converting Councell. Of this *Solomon* speakes clearely (*Eccle.* 9, 14, 15) *There was a little City and few men in it, and there came a great King against it,* &c. *Now there was found a poore wise man in it, and he by his wisdome delivered the Citie.* That is, He gave wise and wholesome Counsell, which being followed, proved an effectuall meanes for the deliverance of the City.

Thirdly, A godly man may be a publique good to save and deliver others by his Prayers & Intercession, by seeking the Lord that they may be deliver'd as the latter branch was opened, he saves them by the purenesse of his hands, lifted up in prayer. Yet we must take this with a Caution; For we cannot affirme it universally, that the righteous have alwayes this priviledge (in the event) to deliver the Island or Nation wherein they are. But we may say, that this is a priviledge which Saints have often been honoured with, and which none but Saints have been honoured with at any time to be the Saviours and Deliverers of a people among whom

Haud tamen deus id semper facit, neq; est quod quisquam in hac re certā ei legem imponat, fallitur ergo Eliphaz si hoc perpetuum eū putavit. Merc.

whom they dwell; For we know the Lord himselfe hath given expresse Exceptions to this rule (*Jer.* 15. 1.) where he tells the stubborn *Jewes* by his Prophet, *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people; Cast them out of my sight, and let them goe forth; and it shall come to passe if they say unto thee, whither shall we goe forth, thou shalt tell them, thus saith the Lord, such as are for death, to death, & such as are for the sword, to the sword, and such as are for famine, to famine.* When he saith, *Though Moses and Samuel stood before mee*; Some may aske, what to doe? I answer, we are not to take it for a mute standing before the Lord, but a standing before the Lord with earnest Prayers, Intercessions, and Supplications, for the sparing of that people; Now saith the Lord, though *Moses* and *Samuel* (who in their generations were eminent godly men, and eminent favourites of God) though these should stand before me, earnestly praying for this people, yet *my minde could not be toward them*, that is, I would not spare them, nor save them from death, sword, famine, or captivity, no not at their entreaty. And we have a like Instance (*Ezek.* 14 14.) *Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it* (there were but two named in *Jeremy*, but here three, though these three men, *Noah, Daniel*, and *Job* were in it) *they should but deliver their owne soules by their righteousness saith the Lord God.* They might have the priviledge mentioned by *Eliphaz* in the former verse, *When men were cast downe, they might say, there is a lifting up*, or there is preservation for us, God will take care of us: but God would not be perswaded, no not by *Noah, Daniel*, and *Job*, to save the rest. So that there are cases wherein the Lord will not heare the Intercessions of the best of men for a sinfull people. The Island of the wicked, or of the not Innocent shall not be delivered, no, not by the purenes of their hands; yet 'tis an experienced truth, that God hath spared a people for the sake of some Godly found among them; yea the reason why the Lord doth not destroy the world which lies in wickednes, is, much, in respect of them who walk in holines. For were it not (as *Elisha* told *Jehoram* to his face in reference to good king *Jehosaphat*, 2 Kings 3. 14.) that God hath regard to their presence in the world, God would not so much as looke towards the ungodly, nor see them for good. This honour have all the Saints, and how great an honour is it to be a publique good, to

to be a Saviour to an Iſland, to a Nation? Some indeed are of ſuch narrow ſpirits, that if they may ſave themſelves, and keepe their own ſtakes, they care not what becomes of the publique, But as it is a great honour to be active for the ſaving and delivering of a Nation, ſo it is a greater honour to have the ſafety and deliverance of a Nation attributed or given in to us by God himſelfe (though not at all by way of deſert, yet) in a way of favour. *Paul* was at Sea with no good company, yet when all looked to be ſwallowed up, *An Angel of God appeared to him, ſaying, Feare not Paul, Thou muſt be brought before Cæſar, and lo, God hath given thee all them that ſaile with thee* (Acts 27. 23, 24.) That is, for thy ſake, or becauſe they are now in thy company, they alſo ſhall eſcape the rage of this tempeſt. They all owe their lives to thee henceforth as well as to me, for *to thee have I given them.* The men of this world might hence take notice of their own folly, who can hardly afford them a good word, or room to live in the world, for whoſe ſake it is that they live. How often do they wiſh and ſeeke their deſtruction, for whoſe ſake it is, that themſelves are not deſtroyed? How often do they accuſe the Godly, as the troublers of a Nation, as the hinderers of publique good: whereas they *are indeed a common good, The Chariots and horſemen,* The Protection and Defence, the Salvation and Deliverance of thoſe States and Nations where they are. The breaches which wicked men make by ſinning, they make up by praying, to turne away the Lords wrath, that they be not conſumed. We read how the Lord Complaines, that there was *none found to make up the hedge,* to ſtand in the gapp when he was coming to deſtroy them. (*Ezek.* 22. 30.) And it is ſaid of *Moſes* (*Pſal.* 106. 23.) that *he ſtood before the Lord in the breach, that he ſhould not deſtroy the Iſraelites.* Which phraſe of *ſtanding in the breach* ſeems to beare an alluſion to an Army beſieging a City, who firſt plant their Canon, and make a breach, and then come to the ſtorme. Thus the Lord deales many times with a people, he encampes againſt them, & batters them, he makes ſome breach upon them by troubles and diviſions, and then expects that ſome ſhould ſtand in the breach, and beſeech him not to ſtorm them with the whole Army of his Judgements. And the Lord takes it well when any of the Valiant Ones, when any of the Worthies of his *Iſrael* preſent themſelves in the breach, praying with utmoſt importunity, that the

the Lord would withdraw thoſe evills which threaten to come in at the breach like armed men and lay waſt a Nation.

And forasmuch as men *of pure hands,* or Godly men have this priviledge to be a *common good,* by being the deliverers of Nations from *common evills and calamities,* I ſhall hint ſome few things from it more diſtinctly.

Firſt, We ſee wherein (under God) the ſtrength and ſafety of Kingdomes and Common-wealths doth conſiſt. It is not, ſo much, in the wiſdome of the Counſeller, or in the courage of the Souldier; It is not, ſo much, in Armyes at Land, or Navyes at Sea; It is not, ſo much, in walled Cities and fortified Caſtles; It is not, ſo much in union at home, or in leagues and confederacies abroad, as it is in the *purity of mens hands,* or in the holines of their lives. *Godlines is the Sampſons lock, wherein the ſtrength of a Nation lyes.* A Heathen could ſay, that *A people were never ſafe by the ſtanding of their walls, while themſelves were falling in their virtues.* It is therefore (if there were nothing better in it) good policy to encourage piety, and to endeavour the encreaſe of a Holy Seed in any Nation. For as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 6. 13.) *As a teile tree and as an oake whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves, ſo the holy ſeed ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof.*

Secondly, In this we ſee the honour which God puts upon Godly men. What can be greater then this, to be really (though perhaps farre from being accounted ſo) the Deliverers and Saviours of their Country? What an honour was it to *Abraham* when God told a King, that he was beholding to *Abraham* for his life, or that favour muſt be granted to him at the ſuit and as it were ſent him by the hand of *Abraham* (Gen. 20. 7.) *He ſhall pray for thee, and thou ſhalt live.* An honour much like this God put upon *Job* alſo, at the latter end of this Booke (*Chap.* 42. 8.) *My ſervant Job ſhall pray for you, for him will I accept, leſt I deale with you after your folly.* Such an Honour (in ſome degree) have all the Saints.

Thirdly, Let men honour thoſe whom God honours thus; and let the Princes and powers of the world be glad when they heare that they have many ſuch in their Dominions. When ſuch are ſubject to them, as rule with God. It is ſaid of *Zerxes* (the Greateſt Monarch in the world in his time) that when *Themiſtocles* came over to him (who was a man Eminent for wiſdome and Eloquence)

Eloquence) that being over joyed at such a treasure, he cryed out in his sleepe; *I have got Themistocles the Athenian.* Spiritual wisdome renders men a Greater treasure to States, then morall wisdome can. Surely then they who are spiritually wise deserve to be reioyced in. I am sure it is not safe to let them be discouraged by whom our safety is established, much lesse is it safe to let them fall by whom in their capacity kingdoms stand; least of all, is it safe to cast them downe, who (by the rule of divine politicks) *are State-upholders.* Therefore let me say this to all *the powers of this world*, do not destroy those who have the priviledge to be *Saviours and Deliverers.* Yea, Take heed of deading and straitning their spirits in prayer for you, above all, take heed of turning their prayers against you. Doe not provoke your owne Horsemen to fight against you, and your own Chariot-wheeles to run over you. As these are the best friends to a Nation, so the worst enemies. Better have many outwardly opposing you, then one (upon just ground) secretly praying, or but complaining to God against you. They who have no power at all in their hands, no not so much as to help or save themselves, may yet destroy many by the *pureness of their hands*, that is, they holding up pure hands in prayer, may bring down destruction upon many who are wicked, and the adversaries of Christ because their adversaries. But that which they mostly doe, and that which they worst of all desire to doe is, *That Lands and Islands may be delivered by the pureness of their hands.*

To shut up this poynt and Chapter, we see, *that as the Saints are killed all the day long*, by the wicked world, *for the Lords sake* (Rom. 8. 36.) that is, because they own the Lord and his wayes: so the wicked of the world are spared even all the day long, or as often as they are spared by the Lord, for the sake of the Saints, that is, because the Lord owns and approves them and their ways, and doth therefore give peace to the world, that so in their peace, they also may have peace.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 23. Vers. 1, 2.

Then Job answered, and said,
Even to day is my complaint bitter, my stroak is heavier then my groaning.

IN the former Chapter we had the third and last charge of *Eliphaz* against *Job*, in this and that which followeth *Job* makes his reply, and defends himselfe against what *Eliphaz* had objected and charged upon him. There are two opinions concerning the tendency of this reply.

First Some interpret it in favour of *Job*, as if he only summoned his friends to the tribunall of God, being confident of a good issue there.

Secondly, Others interpret it as a presumptuous suggestion against God himselfe, and the strictnesse of his proceedings with him, which they endeavour to prove upon (as they conceive) these foure grounds of his complaint.

First, Because he *complained* that his afflictions were beyond all his *complaints*; and that what he had said was but little to what he felt, or to the greatnesse of his sorrow (*ver.* 1, 2.) *Even to day is my complaint bitter, my stroake is heavier then my groaning.* These words are conceived, to cary in them, at least, an intimation that *Job* thought himself too hardly dealt with, or that there was no just cause why he should be prosecuted and proceeded against with so much severity by the continued and renewed stroakes of God upon him. And indeed it cannot be denyed, *That he* (whosoever he is) *is justly judged as over-bold with God, who judgeth any of the dealings of God with himselfe or with any other man over-severe.* But we shall finde, that though *Job* complained often that his sorrows (as to him) were exceeding great, yet he never complained, that (as to God) they were unjust.

Secondly, (Say they) because he complained, that he could not get admittance unto God, nor audience with him, which was a further aggravation of his sorrow. This he prosecutes from the third verse to the end of the ninth. *O that I knew where I might finde him, that I might come even to his seate, I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments, I would know the words which he would answer me,* &c. As if (according to the scope of this exposition) he had said, *I have waited long under my pressures and burdens, with my petition in my hand, yea I have tendered it in my petition, but as yet I can get no answer; Alas, I am greatly afflicted, yet so farre from being releeved, That I cannot be heard, I would therefore get near God, to spread and order my cause before him.* To be heard and to be releeved, are often in Scripture fence the same thing, and always not to be heard signifies as much as not to be releeved. Till the Lord gives us his ear he never gives us his hand, therefore *Job* must needs think himself farre from being helped while he thought that he was not heard.

Thirdly, Because he complained that the Lord did thus afflict and try him, when he already knew what he was, and what he would be after his tryall by the soarest afflictions; when he knew that he was innocent, & that he would continue & hold out in his innocency to the end That he would not be weary of well-doing, though under the worst of sufferings. (*Ver.* 10, 11, 12.) *He knoweth the way that I take,* &c. As if he had said, *The Lord needs not doe this to try me, for he knoweth well enough who I am, and the way that I go; he knoweth both the frame of my heart and the course of my life; he knoweth how it is with me now, and that I shall be found such as I have often professed my self to be, when he hath kept me to the utmost of his purpose in this fiery furnace of affliction. When he hath tryed me I shall come forth as gold,* that is, *when all's done, he knows that I shall hereafter approve my selfe upright in heart, and that (through his grace, already bestowed upon me) I have hetherto kept his way, & not declined nor gon back from the commandements of his lips yea that I have esteemed the words of his mouth more then my necessary food.* Thus *Job* is conceived complaining upon this account, that he should be so extreamly afflicted, though the Lord knew his way, and that he was both a lover of his Word, and a keeper of his Commandements, and that he would persevere with joy in keeping them to the end, though he should not see the expected and desired end of those sorrows.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Because he is conceived complaining that he found the Lord altogether inexorable, so that no impression could be made upon him by any thing he could say or doe to take him off from his severity towards him (*Ver.* 13, 14.) *He is of one minde, who can turne him* (there is no dealing with God) *and what his soule desireth, even that he doth* (let it fall where and on whom it will, he will do it) *for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me.*

From all which *Job* inferreth, that he had cause enough to complaine, much more that he did not complaine without cause. (*Ver.* 15, 16, 17.) *Therefore am I troubled at his presence when I consider, I am afraid of him, for God makes my heart soft, and the Allmighty troubleth me, because I was not cut off before the darkenesse, neither hath he covered the darknesse from my face.* Thus you have the parts and scope of the whole Chapter, as 'tis supposed to be an over-bold complaint in reference to the dealings of the Lord with him.

From all which 'tis concluded, that though the Chapter begins with, *Then Job answered, and said,* yet, that *Job* doth not answer *Eliphaz.* nor apply himself to what he had said; but that being wearied with his often repeating, and renewing the same arguments against him, he doth, upon the matter, leave him and his friends, and all discourse with them; turning himself to God, and powring his sorrows into his bosome; as if the answer were directed to God, and not at all to *Eliphaz.*

Sæpe antea statuerat Job, se amicorum exacerbantibus sermonibus defessum, nolle amplius cum ijs differere, sed potius cum deo aquissimo judice; Nunc hoc suum propositū ad implere tentans ad deum sermonem dirigit, vel ad seipsum, i. e. secum ipse ratiocinatur. Bold.

But I rather apprehend (according to the former interpretation of this reply) that *Job* doth here plainly hold forth an answer to what *Eliphaz* had objected or layd to his charge, and that being still so hotly opposed, he doth first defend his own integrity in this Chapter; and that, secondly, in the next he overthroweth the ground or foundation upon which his friends built their generall opposition: affirming, that there is neither any certain time nor way in which the Lord doth punish wicked men in this world, and that therefore no argument can be framed, or judgement given of any mans condition by his present state, or the externall dispensations of God towards him. Taking this sence, we may reduce the whole Chapter to these two parts.

First, A preface; secondly, the pleading it selfe.

The preface is laid downe in the second verse; *Even to day is*

my complaint bitter, my stroake is heavier then my groaning; the pleading follows in the subsequent parts of the Chapter; the sum of which may be collected into this formal Argumentation.

Ye doe falsely accuse him of wickednesse, and hypocrisie, who is ready to plead his cause, and doth earnestly desire that he may doe it before the throne of God.

But I am ready and doe earnestly desire to plead my cause before the throne of God.

Therefore ye falsely accuse me of wickednesse and hypocrisie.

The assumption only of this Syllogisme is handled in this Chapter, from the second verse to the end; in which it appeares, that *Job* was ready not onely to dispute the point in controversie with his friends, but was most willing that the Lord should have the hearing of it; for so he saith, *O that I knew where I might finde him, that I might even come to his seate, I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.* That is, I would produce such arguments for my selfe, and against my opposers, as would render my cause just and innocent before God, how guilty soever I am found and represented in the opinion of men.

Thus farre concerning the generall state of this Chapter.

I shall next proceed to explicate the parts and particulars of it.

Vers. 1. *Then Job answered, and said*;

These words have occurr'd often before, I shall not stay upon them. But what said he? and how did he answer?

Vers. 2. *Even to day is my complaint bitter, my stroake is heavier then my groaning.*

Thus *Job* begins, This is at once his proluge to what he had to say, and his Apology for what he had (passionately) said already. *Even to day*, or *even this day.* The word *day* is taken either more largely for the time neere at hand, or strictly, for the present time. (*Psal.* 95. 8.) *To day if ye will heare his voice, harden not your hearts*; That is, *Hear his voice this instant day, and harden not your hearts one day longer.* Againe (*Deut* 4. 8.) *What Nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgements so righteous as all this law, that I have set before you this day*, or at this present

present time. *Jacob* saith to *Esau* (Gen. 25. 31.) *Sell me this day thy birth-right*; that is, let me have it now, let us strike up the bargaine this houre, or before we part. Thus here, *To day*, &c. As if *Job* had said, *O friend Eliphaz, I perceive that after all those dayes of disputation which have passed between us, this day is like to be spent and run out in as harsh censures on your part, and in as bitter complaints on my part as any of the former.*

Even this day is my complaint bitter.

The word rendred *complaint*, is translated also sometimes *prayer*, and sometimes *meditation.* (Gen. 24. 69.) *Isaac went out into the field to meditate*, we put in the Margin, *to pray. Hannah* useth the same word (1 *Sam.* 1. 16.) *Account not thy handmaid for a daughter of Beliall, for out of the abundance of my complaint* (we put in the Margin, *Meditation*) *and griefe, have I spoken hitherto.* Many complaine, who pray not, some pray, who complaine not, and others meditate, who doe neither complaine nor pray, yet usually we meditate, that we may consider what to pray about, & in prayer powre out our complaints both about those sins and wants and mercies, which have fallen under our meditation.

Even to day is my complaint bitter.

The Originall word hath a twofold derivation, most render it as we, *bitter*, Bitternesse in Scripture is often used by a metaphor, to denote any thing which is grievous, troublesome, afflictive, or distastfull to us, because bitter things are so to the pallate or tast of man. Bitter things are troublesome to sence, and troubles are bitter to the Spirit. *Affliction is a bitter pill; thou writest bitter things against me*, said *Job* to God before (*Chap.* 13 26.) so that when he saith *my complaint is bitter*, it sounds thus much my complaint is as great as great can be, and I have the greatest reason to complaine. For *by complaint*, we are to understand not onely the act of complaining, but the matter upon which he did complaine, or the cause of his complaint. As if he had said, *My afflictions (about which I complaine) are exceeding bitter, no marvaile then if my complaint be so too.*

Aliqui deducunt a מרד *quod significat amaritudinem, alij a* מרה *denotant rebellionem seu contumaciam.*

Secondly, The word comes from a roote, signifying to rebell, to disobey, to be exasperated, or (as some learned in the Hebrew give

give it) to vary or alter the frame of a mans spirit, and the disposition of his minde; because they who disobey and rebell, doe certainly vary and change their minds from what they ingaged to be, or professed they were before; they turn aside either from the lawfull command given them, or from the promise & faith which they had given. So the word is used (*1 Kings* 13. 26.) Where the sacred History tells us of a Prophet who was sent out upon a Message by the Lord unto *Jeroboam*, and though he faithfully performed the Message, yet hearkning to the counsell of another Prophet, he was slaine by a Lion; *Thou saith the Lord for as much as thou hast disobeyed* (or rebelled against) *the mouth of the Lord*, (that is, the words that proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord,) *and hast not kept the commandement which the Lord thy God commanded thee*, &c. *Thy carkasse shall not come into the sepulcher of thy fathers.* Thus the word is translated by some in this Text, of *Jobs disobedience or rebellion*; And they render the whole sentence with an interrogation.

מרי exasperatio proprie variatio, alienitas, ut sic dicam; quod qui rebellat, variet & insurgat verbum & mandatum alterius, aut fœdus cum eo iniens.

What, is my complaint this day, accounted rebellion? as if I did contumaciously set my selfe against God, while I am powring out my sorrows before him; whereas indeed, my complaint is rather rebellious or stout against your consolations, it yeilds not to them, nor is at all abated by them. The way or course which you take to comfort me, is too weake to grapple with, much more is it too weak to conquer and subdue my sorrows.

Etiam hodie contumacia. (Thebeur) quærimonia mea? Contumam est quæstus meus, patiat. q. d. non paret non cedet solatijs vestris. Rab. Sol:

Yet further, This sence and translation of the word, may be applyed to that speech of *Eliphaz* in the former Chapter (*ver.* 21.) exhorting *Job* to *acquaint himselfe with God, and to be at peace.* As if he had said, *Leave off thy distances, lay downe the weapons of that most unholy warre which thou hast taken up against God.* To which close rebuke *Job* answers here, what? *Is my complaint to God looked upon by you as a combate with God? or do ye thinke that while I beg pity and favour of God, I have bid him defiance, or declared my selfe his enemie? What else can be the meaning of it, that you exhort me so seriously to reconcile my selfe to God? He that is called to make peace with another, is supposed to be at warre with him, or at least to beare him ill will.* So then, according to this rendering, and interpretation of the Text, the drift of his speech is to shew how little ground there was, yea how unjust it was, that he should be accused of rebellion and contumacy against God, while he was onely bemoaning

bemoaning his own sad condition, and putting up his complaint to God. We may forme up his sence into this argumentation.

He cannot be justly accused of rebellion against God, who complains much, or greatly, when his griefe is more or greater.

But my griefe is more and greater then my complaint.

Therefore I cannot be justly accused of rebellion against God, because I complaine.

Againe, The text is thus rendred; *Even to day the sharpnes or bitternesse of my complaint remaineth, or my sorrow is as it was. I am no way eased but rather more afflicted by what you have said for the easing of my affliction. An impr-per plaister doth but expresse me, not at all heale, the wound.* So that, as according to the former interpretation, he tooke off their charge of impatience, contumacy, and rebellion against God, according to the mind of this he shews the weaknesse and insufficiency of what they had spoken, as to the allay of his sorrow, and the curing or satisfying of his distempered spirit. So that here he seemes to renew and confirme that opinion on which he had given of his friends in their procedure with him (*Chap.* 13. 4.) *Ye are forgers of lyes, yea are all Physitians of no valne: O that ye would altogether hold your peace, and it should be your wisdome.* And againe (*Ch.* 16. 2.) *Miserable Comforters are ye all; Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest. So here, ye have done nothing yet effectually to remove my complaint: I am like a poore patient, who having been long under the Physitians hand, and suffered many painefull applications, is yet as farre from a cure as the first houre of his undertaking. Even to day the bitternes the sharpnes of my diseased mind remaineth. I have been in paine* (as the Church speaks, *Isa.* 26. 18.) *I have as it were brought forth winde. Ye have not wrought any deliverance, neither hath this inhabitant* (my sorrow) *fallen by your hand.*

Etiam hodie est (vel suo loco manet) exasperatio querelæ mea. Merc. Quasi ex noxio medicamine vanum evasit. Forum potest de ista verba vestra, quibus persuadebam me ut me solarentur, augatur ira quæ in hoc est in vestris verbis consolationis. Merc.

Lastly, Some referre these words to the promise made by *Eliphaz* (Chap 22. 21.) exhorting *Job to acquaint himselfe with God*, &c. *and so good should come to him. But* saith *Job* here, *Though I am cleare from what you accuse me of, and also have commission with God in wayes of holines, yet I experience no such good in your promise. I am not brought into wayes of comfort, but rather my sorrows encrease, and my complaint is as bitter this day, as ever it was.*

And

Aud (as it follows in the Text)

My stroake is heavier then my groaning.

Non satis pro gravitate plagæ conquerat; superat plaga querimoniam. Merc.

This he addeth as a further explication, or as a proofe of the former part of the verse; as if he had said, *If ye inquire why my complaint is so bitter, it is because my stroake is so heavy, even heavier then my groaning; And why should ye call my complaint rebellion, seeing I doe not complaine more, no nor so much as I have cause, My stroake is heavier then my groaning.* Thus he is still labouring to acquit himself of that so often repeated accusation, impatience under the hand of God, and rebellion against him.

Sic se excusat ab impatientia & contumacia objecta q. d. *Injustissimum est me a vobis accusari quia querar de meis malis cum multo gravior sit plaga.*

My stroake.

The Hebrew is, *my hand*, the hand is taken for that which was done by the hand; The instrument for the effect, *my hand*, that is, *the stroake of the hand that is upon me*; whose hand was that? the hand of God he meanes. As if it had been said more expressely, *The stroak of the hand of God upon me is heavier then my groaning.* In the former part of the verse, he spake *of the bitternesse of his complaint*, here of the *heavinesse of his stroake*, or *that the stroake given him was exceeding heavy.* As bitter things are grievous to the pallate, so heavy things are burdensome to the whole body; *We are soon weary of that which is very heavy.* And therefore (*Mat.* 11. 30.) when Christ would convince us that we have no reason to be weary of that burden, which he layeth upon us, (his holy counsels and commandements) he saith, *My yoke is easie, and my burthen light*: My burdens are not like those which the Pharisees bind upon you, *heavy and grievous to be borne* (Matth. 23. 4.) So here, when *Job* saith, *My stroake is heavy*, he would have his friends know that his were (in themselves) no light afflictions (though there is a sence in which all the afflictions of the Saints *are light*, 2 Cor. 4. 17.) but grievous to be born.

Manus pro plaga a manu dei inflicta. *Metonymicus.*

Secondly, Some read the words thus, *My stroake is heavier upon my groanings, or when I groane*; As if he had said, *the more I groane and sigh, the more I am wounded, I get nothing by my groanings but fresh smitings and additional sorrows.*

Thirdly, Others translate the Hebrew word properly, not *stroake* (by a Metonymie of the effect) but *hand*. *My hand is heavy upon* (or because of) *my groaning*; that is, *my hand is weake*

weake because of my groanings; a weak hand, is a heavy hand, that is heavy, which is not lifted up without difficulty. Now when the hand is weake we can hardly lift it to our head (as we say) The weake hand is a heavy hand, not because of the weight of it, but because of the weaknes of it, or want of strength to weild any thing with it, or to hold it up. In this sence we are to understand *Job* crying out, *My hand is heavy because of my groaning*; As if he had said; *My strength failes me, my hands hang downe, and through weaknesse I am not able to lift them up.* In the fourth Chapter, *Eliphaz* told *Job*, that he by his good counsel had formerly *strengthened the weake, or the loosened hands.* Which forme of speaking answers that of the Apostle (*Heb.* 12. 12.) *Lift up the hands that hang down.* Weaknesse is as a weight fastned to the hand, and holding it downe. The hand is never so much fastned, as when it is (in this sence) made lax or loosened. The Originall word here used intimates, that much sorrow and trouble weigh downe the hand; *My hand is heavy because of my groaning*, or (as we read) *My stroake is heavier then my groaning.*

Manus meas aggravata super genitum meum, i. e. propter genitus et planctus quos dolores extorquent, etiam vires meæ deficiunt, manusq; lossæ & remissæ vix præ imbecillitate attolli possunt. Scult.

Thus we have *Job* still complaining and groaning; whence was all this? even from the sence of his sore afflictions.

Which may teach us;

First, *That affliction doth usually vent it self in complaints and groans.*

While we are in the flesh, we are subject to affliction; and all affliction is grievous to the flesh, not only to flesh as it notes the corruption of the soule, but to flesh as taken for the constitution of the body. *Affliction will be felt; It makes the flesh smart*; and when the flesh smarts, it may make him complain and groan who is spirituall; yea complaints and groans give some ease to our afflictions. As the pain of affliction causeth groaning and complaining, so groaning and complaining are some releefe in our paines. & hence it hath been reported as one of the highest peices of cruelty not to allow those who have been under exquisite paines to complaine and groan; for though groaning doth not at all abate the paine, yet it doth somewhat divert our thoughts from it, and while we communicate it to others in complaints, we are somewhat the lesse sencible of it our selves.

Secondly, Whereas *Job* checks his friends (according to the

ſecond expoſition of the words) for calling or accounting his complaint rebellion.

Obſerve;

That we are apt to miſunderſtand and wrongfully interpret the complaints of others.

Many are ready to miſ-interpret that which we ſpeak deliberately, much more what we ſpeake paſſionately and complainingly; *Job* ſpake ſorrowfully, and he was preſently judged to ſpeak rebelliouſly; he was but humbling and bemoaning himſelf before God, yet he was eſteemed as a man riſing up againſt and warring with God. While *Hanna* was making a prayerfull complaint to God, *Eli a good man* thought ſhe was overgon with wine (1 *Sam.* 1. 14.) *How long wilt thou be drunk, put away thy wine from thee.* When the Apoſtles were uttering the great things of God, as *ſome were amazed*, ſo *others mocked, ſaying, Theſe men are full of new wine* (Acts 2. 13.) There are two ſorts of words and actions moſt liable to miſ-interpretation.

Firſt, When we act or ſpeak highly in holineſſe; for then the world looks upon thoſe of ſoundeſt minds as mad, or vaine, as diſtracted or drunken, *theſe men* (ſaith the world) *are full of new wine*; whereas indeed (as *Peter* makes anſwer in the *Acts*) *they are not drunken, as is ſuppoſed, but filled with the Spirit. Feſtus* told *Paul*, that he was *beſide himſelf, that much learning had made him mad*, when he heard the diſcourſe of his wonderfull converſion to Chriſt, and holy converſation in Chriſt (*Acts* 26.24.) And it ſeems that ſome among the *Corinthians* had no better nor other opinion of him, elſe he would not have made ſuch an Apology for himſelfe and fellow-ſervants in Goſpel-worke (2 *Cor.* 5. 13.) *Whether we be beſides our ſelves it is to God*, &c. that's a ſober madneſſe indeed which is to God. But thus ſtill we ſee they who act or ſpeake higheſt in grace, are cenſured as acting and ſpeaking below nature. And as theſe whoſe graces are moving aloft, are often ſuſpected of madneſſe,

So, ſecondly, they who lye below complaining under the preſſures of nature by affliction, are as often ſuſpected of and charged with impatience. *A troubled ſpirit can hardly judge aright of it ſelfe, and is ſeldome rightly judged by others.* I will end this poynt with two Cautions. The firſt to all, concerning thoſe that are afflicted; The ſecond to all that are afflicted.

To

To the former I ſay, *judge charitably of thoſe who complain bitterly*; for as a man in a low condition knoweth not what himſelf would either be or doe, were he advanced to the heights of honour and power; ſo he that is at eaſe, and wel, knoweth not what himſelfe would either be or do, were he in paine or overwhelmed with ſorrows. *Extreames in any ſtate are rarely borne with a well or duely tempered moderation.*

Secondly, To the latter I ſay, let them expect to heare themſelves hardly cenſured and learne to bear it. let not ſuch thinke ſtrange of their ſufferings, either under the hand of God, or by the tongues of men. *Great ſufferers ſpeake often unbecomingly, and are as often ſo ſpoken of.*

Thirdly, Foraſmuch as the matter of this ſuggeſtion againſt *Job, tumultuous and rebellious ſpeeches*, at leaſt ſpeeches favouring ſtrongly of rebellion are incident to any Godly man in *Jobs* condition. Obſerve.

There may be rebellion againſt God in a good mans complainings under the afflicting hand of God.

An unquiet ſpirit is not onely a great burden to man, but a diſhonour to God. Our diſſatisfaction with the dealings of God, carrieth in it (at leaſt an implicit) accuſation of him, or that God hath not done well becauſe it is ill (to ſence) with us. There is a rebellion againſt the rod as wel as againſt the word of God. For as our ſtrugling and ſtriving with the word of God & the unquietneſſe of our hearts under any truth when it takes hold of us is rebellion againſt God, ſo to ſtrive, and ſtraggle, with the rod of God, or with the croſſe that he layes upon us is rebellion againſt him alſo. God ſpeakes to us by his rod as well as by his word; and we ſpurne at God in wrangling with his rod, as well as in wrangling with his word. Yea to have hard thoughts of God, as that he is ſevere, and rigorous, that he hath put off his bowells of compaſſion towards us, and forgotten to be gracious; ſuch thoughts, as theſe of God under affliction, are rebelious thoughts. And as there is a rebellion in the thoughts againſt God in caſe of affliction; ſo alſo in the Tongue. Thus, to murmur is to rebell. I doe not ſay that all complaining is rebelling, but all murmuring is; we may complain and tell the Lord how ſad it is with us, how much our ſoules, our bodies, our eſtates, our relations bleed and

ſmart. We may complaine, and make great complaints without ſin, but the leaſt murmuring is ſinfull, yea in the very nature of it, ſo full of ſin, that it uſually & deſervedly paſſeth under the name of Rebellion. The children of *Iſrael* were as often charged with rebellion as with murmuring; And therefore when they murmured for want of water, *Moſes* ſaid unto them, *Hear now ye rebels, muſt we fetch you water out of this Rocke?* (Numb. 20. 10.) And againe, *Moſes* chargeth this upon them with his laſt breath (as it were) *Deut.* 31. 27. *I know thy rebellion and thy ſtiffe neck, behold while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious againſt the Lord, and how much more after my death*: yea the Lord himſelfe chargeth rebellion upon that unparalleld payre of Brethren, *Moſes* and *Aaron* themſelves, becauſe they had not ſo fully as they ought at all times and in all things ſubmitted unto his divine diſpenſations among that people, (*Numb.* 24.) *The Lord ſpake to Moſes, ſaying, Aaron ſhall be gathered unto his people, for he ſhall not enter into the Land which I have given unto the children of Iſrael, becauſe ye* (the Lord puts them both together in the ſin) *rebelled againſt my word at the waters of Meribah.*

Fourthly, whereas *Job* ſaith; *Even to day my complaint is bitter.* Obſerve;

The Afflictions and ſorrows of ſome eminently Godly, ſticke by them, or continue long upon them.

It is with afflictions as with diſeaſes, there are ſome acute diſeaſes, ſharpe and feirce for a while, but they laſt not, they are over in a few dayes: for either the diſeaſe departs from the man, or the man departs out of the world by the feirceneſſe of his diſeaſe. There are alſo Chronicall diſeaſes, laſting, lingring diſeaſes, that hang about a man many dayes, yea moneths and years, and will not be gone while he lives, but lye downe in the grave with him. Such a difference we find among thoſe other afflictions and troubles which are not ſeated (as diſeaſes) in the body, but reach the whole eſtate of man. Some are acute and ſharp, like the fierce fits of a feavor, but they laſt not: or like Summers ſudden ſtorms, which are ſoone followed with a ſucceſſion of faire weather. But there are alſo chronicall afflictions, tuffe and unmoveable troubles, which abide by us, which dwell with us day after day, yeare after yeare, and never leave us while we live, or till we leave the world.

world. Many a good man hath carryed his affliction with him to the grave. If any ſhall object; how then is that of *David* true, (*Pſal.* 30 5.) *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* I anſwer; Firſt, That Scripture ſpeakes of that which is often experienced, but not alwayes; ſecondly, It is moſt true alſo that all our weeping is but for a night, yea but for *a Moment* (as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) compared with that morning of joy when the day of our bleſſed eternity ſhall begin. Thirdly, the *Pſalme* hath this ſcope chiefely, to ſhew, that the troubles of the Saints are not everlaſting, not that they are never laſting; or to ſhew that the night of weeping ſhall at laſt conclude in a morning of joy to the Godly, not that their night of weeping ſhall preſently conclude. For as ſome have only a Summers night, or a ſhort night of ſorrow, ſo others have a winters night, or a long night of ſorrow. And this night of ſorrow, may be as long not only as many naturall dayes or as ſome yeares, but as long as all the naturall dayes and yeares of this preſent life. The morning of joy is not to be underſtood of the next morrow after the ſorrow began, for how long ſoever our weeping continues, it is night with us, and whenſoever joy comes (though at midnight) 'tis morning with us. For ſure enough as thoſe ſons of pleaſure are deſcribed (*Iſa.* 56. 12.) promiſing themſelves the continuance of their joyes; (*To morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant, therefore come fetch wine and let us drinke to day, there will be wine enough for to morrow too*, thus they promiſed themſelves that their pleaſures ſhould continue in a ſucceſſion of many morrows, now as theſe ſonnes of pleaſure promiſed themſelves the continuance of their delight) ſo many of the ſons & daughters of ſorrow have found and ſtill finde a continuance of their troubles, and have cauſe to ſay, this day is even as bad as yeſterday was; yea our bitter cup, our wine of aſtoniſhment is much more abundant, our ſorrow is greater this day then it was yeſterday, that was a blacke ſad gloomy day, and this is a day more blacke, ſad, and gloomy then that was.

Fifthly, From theſe words; *My ſtroake is heavier then my groaning.* Obſerve;

That the afflictions of ſome of the precious ſervants of God, exceed, and ſurpaſſe all their complaints and groans.

The groans of ſome are heavier then their ſtroake, and the ſtroakes

ſtroakes of not a few are heavier then their groanes. So me ſhew more ſorrow then they have, and others have more ſorrows then they can ſhew. *I*, ſaith *Job*, *cannot tell you no not ſo much as by the language of my groaning; how heavy my ſtroake is.* As there *is a peace of God* a peace which he giveth to many of his people in this life *which paſſeth all underſtanding* (Phil. 4. 6.) they have a ſence of ſuch peace ſometimes upon their ſpirits as their underſtandings know not what to make of it, they are ſo farre from being able to tell you what it is, that they are not able to conceive what it is, but muſt confeſſe that their peace is greater and larger then their underſtanding, now (I ſay) as the peace which God gives his paſſeth their underſtandings) ſo the troubles and ſorrows of many who are deare to God, exceed, or ſurpaſſe all their expreſſions, they cannot declare, nor can any for them, how it is with them. Again, as there is in this life a joy in believing, which is unſpeakable (1 *Pet.* 1. 8) ſo there is a ſorrow in ſuffering which is unſpeakable. And (which is very wonderfull) theſe two meet ſometimes in the ſame perſon, who at the very inſtant while his ſorrow is ſo great that he is not able to expreſſe it, hath alſo ſweet and raviſhing joyes beyond expreſſion. Yet I conceive (as to *Jobs* caſe) his ſpirit was darke, and his minde troubled, as well as his body was pained, and his outward eſtate torne and ruin'd.

Sixthly, From theſe words; *My ſtroake is heavier then my groaning.*

Obſerve;

That, *it is ſinfull to groane and complaine beyond the ſtroake that is upon us, or to complaine more then we have cauſe.*

Job ſeems here to yeeld it, and confeſſe, that if his ſtroake had not been ſo heavy, his groanes had not been innocent; and if it be ſinfull to groane, and complaine more, or beyond our ſtroakes, how ſinfull is it to complaine without any ſtroake at all? Some complaine without cauſe, and groane before they are ſmitten, yea, ſome are ready to complaine when they are incompaſſed about with many mercies, and are not ſatisfied when they are filled; they complaine, becauſe they have not what they would, or becauſe others have more then they, though themſelves have enough, if they knew what is enough. The Ox and the Aſſe are a rebuke to ſuch; For as *Job* ſpeaketh (Chap. 6.) *Will the Aſſe bray*

bray when he hath graſſe, or loweth the Ox over his fodder? Irrationall creatures will not complaine when they have the conveniences of nature. Surely then thoſe men act much below grace, who complaine when they have food convenient, and health convenient, yea all things convenient (poſſibly aboundant) for the ſupport of nature; who complaine when they have not ſo much as an akeing joynt about them, or the ſcratch of a pin, no nor the want of a pin, nor of a ſhooe-latchet. Some complain when they have meate enough, becauſe they have not ſauce, yea ſome complaine when they have both meate and ſauce enough, the affluence of all things, not onely for neceſſity but for delight. What ſhall we ſay of them who are never well neither full nor faſting; who are ſo farre from having learned the Apoſtles leſſon to be content in all eſtates, that are content in none. The people of *Iſrael* murmured not only when they wanted bread, but when they had it; when they had Mannah they murmured for Quailes, and at laſt they murmured at their very Mannah, their ſoules loathed that light bread: Conſider how great their ſinne is, who complaine upon ſuch termes as theſe, who complaine before they are hurt, yea who complaine when they have no cauſe but to be very thankfull. We live in complaining times, many cry out of preſſures and burthens, nothing pleaſeth many among us, becauſe every thing is not as they pleaſe. *Take heed your groanings be not heavier then your ſtroake*, eſpecially take heed ye be not found groaning without a ſtroak, and complaining over your bleſſings; the Lord hath healed our ſtroakes in a great degree, but our complaining-are not healed; If we be found complaining when we have no cauſe, or when we ſhould be giving thanks, we may quickly provoke God to give us cauſe enough of complaining. God hath heavier ſtroakes for them, whoſe groaning is heavier then their ſtroake, and he hath heavieſt ſtroakes for them, who groan when they are not ſtricken. When children cry for nothing, they are usually made to feele ſomething which will make them cry to purpoſe. This humour is childiſh enough in children, it is worſe in men, but it is worſt of all in Chriſtians, who are alſo the children of God. There are two things which God will not bear in his; Firſt, when they grow wanton with a mercy; Secondly, when they complaine without a croſſe. To complaine under a croſſe,

croſſe, is to act below grace; To complaine of a croſſe, is to act againſt grace. To complaine beyond a croſſe, is a defect of grace, but to complaine without a croſſe, is a defect in nature.

The Apoſtles rule is (1 *Theſ.* 5.18.) *in every thing give thanks*, and he gives his reaſon for it in the words which follow, *for this is the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus concerning you.* Now, if it be the will of God that we ſhould give thanks in every thing, then it muſt be againſt his will that we ſhould complaine in any thing. *Complaining is contrary to thanks-giving.* A godly man may ſee two things in the heavieſt ſtroakes of his affliction, which may provoke him to thankſgiving, at leaſt, which may ſtop him from all immoderate complaining; Firſt, That God hath a reſpect to his good in his heavieſt afflictions, and that the iſſue ſhall certainly be good to him. Secondly, that how heavy ſo ever his ſtroake is, his ſin hath deſerved a heavier, and that God could have made it heavier, even his little finger heavier upon him, then his loyns have been. That our ſtroake might have been heavier may ſtop our complaining, but our heavieſt ſtroake ſhall turn to our benefit, ſhould ſtirre us up to thankſgiving: In heaven there will not be the leaſt ſhadow of a cauſe to complaine; Thankſgiving will be all our worke, and the worke of all in heaven; And by how much we are the more in thankſgiving and the leſſe in complaining on earth (unleſſe it be of and againſt our ſelves for ſinne) the more heavenly we are. When we are ſtricken we ſhould complaine as little as we can, and we ſhould always be able to ſay (as *Job* here) *That our complaint is not greater then our ſtroake.*

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 23. Verſ. 3, 4, 5.

Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeate:

I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.

I would know the words which he would anſwer me, and underſtand what he would ſay unto me.

JOB having ſhewed in the former verſe, how bitter and how ſad his Condition was, even farre beyond his own Complaint, and that his ſtroake was heavier then his groaning; he now turnes himſelfe from earth to heaven, from the creature to the Creator, from man to God. *Job* had been among his friends a great while, they had debated the matter long, but all in vaine, and without fruit to his ſoul; he had yet received no Comfort: What will he doe next? ſee here his addreſſe to God.

Verſ. 3. *O that I knew where I might finde him! that I might come even to his ſeat:*

O that I knew!

The Hebrew is, *who will give me to know*, &c. The words are a forme of wiſhing, ordinary among the Jewes; *Who will give, or who will grant me this or that, O that I knew*, &c. And it Intimates or Implyes two things.

Firſt, A vehement and ſtrong deſire after ſomewhat much deſierable; who will give me this? or where ſhall I have it?

Secondly, It Implyes ſelfe-Inability, or ſelfe-Inſufficiency to attaine and reach the thing deſired. As if *Job* had ſaid; *I am not able of my ſelfe to finde him, O that I knew where I might finde him! O that I either had the light of this knowledge in my ſelfe, or that ſome body would enforme and teach me! O that I had a friend to Chalke me out the way, to lead me by the hand, and bring me neer to God.*

Quis mihi tribuat ut cognoſcam & inveniam illum. Vulg.

The vulgar latine Reading fixeth both thoſe acts upon God as the Object; *O that ſome one or other would give me to know and finde him!* As if his wiſh and longing deſire were firſt to know God, ſecondly, to finde him; or in finding to know him. Our tranſlation determines this knowing in *Job*, and finding upon *God*. *O that I knew where I might finde him!* Who it is that *Job* would finde is not expreſt in the text by name, nor is there any Antecedent in the verſ before, with which we can Connect this relative *him*. Yet 'tis beyond queſtion or diſpute that he means God. *O that I might finde him!* that is, *God*. But why did he not ſay, *O that I knew where to finde God*, but, *O that I knew where to finde him?* I anſwer, He doth it becauſe his heart being full of God, he ſuppoſed that thoſe to whom he ſpake had their hearts full of him too, and ſo would eaſily underſtand whom he meant, or that he could mean none but God.

We find ſuch kinde of abrupt ſpeeches (as I may call them) in other Texts of Scripture, ſtill ariſing from fullneſs and ſtrength of affection in the ſpeaker. See how *Solomon* begins his Love-ſong; *his Song of Songs. The Song of Songs which is Solomons*, that's the title of it; How doth it begin? *Let him kiſſe me* &c. Here is a ſtrange Exordium to a Song, none having been ſpoken of before, *Let him kiſſe me with the kiſſes of his mouth!* by whom the Church would be kiſſed ſhe expreſſeth not, but her heart was ſo full of Chriſt, ſo full of love to Chriſt her Bridegroome, her husband, that ſhe thinks it needleſſe to mention him by name, when ſhe ſpeakes of him whoſe kiſſes ſhe deſired. Her love had paſſed through the whole Creation, through men and Angels, through all things here below, and fixt it ſelfe onely upon Chriſt her Lord and Love. Therefore ſhe never ſtood ſpeaking perſonally of him, but only relatively, and leaves all to underſtand whom ſhe intended. Thus ſaith *Job*, *O that I knew where I might finde him!* when as he had not ſpoken of any diſtinct perſon before, in this Chapter. And we have a like paſſage flowing from a like abundant love to Chriſt, in the 20. of *John*, ver. 15. where *Mary* comes to the Sepulchre (Chriſt being riſen) and the Angell ſeeing her weep asked her the reaſon of it; To whom ſhe replyed, *Becauſe they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him*; having thus ſaid, *ſhe turned her ſelfe backe, and ſaw Jeſus ſtanding, and knew not that it was Jeſus: he ſaith unto her, Woman, why weepeſt*

weepeſt thou? whom ſeekeſt thou? She ſuppoſing him to be the Gardiner, ſaid, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou haſt laid him. She never names Chriſt, but only ſaith, *If thou have borne him hence*, &c. becauſe her heart was full of Chriſt, ſhe thought his heart was full of him too, and that he underſtood her well enough whom ſhe meant, though ſhe ſaid not whom ſhe meant. Thus in the preſent text, *Job* was to God at that time, as *Mary* to Chriſt, at a loſſe for him, not knowing where to finde him, God was as it were removed from him, as Chriſt was riſen from the Sepulchre; Therefore he complainingly and affectionately enquires; *O that I knew where I might find him!* My ſoule is a thirſt for God, my heart pants after him, *O that I knew*

where I might finde him!

The Hebrew word ſignifieth to *finde*, by going out to meet a man, or (as we ſay) to light upon him. As *Ahab* ſaid to *Elijah* (*1 Kings* 21. 20.) *Haſt thou found* (or met) *me O mine enemy?* and he anſwered, *I have found* (or met) *thee*. So the word is uſed (*2 Kings* 10. 13.) *Jehu met with the Brethren of Ahaziah King of Judah*; In the Margin we ſay, *Jehu found the Brethren of Ahaziah*, that is he met them upon the way, for he went out to meet them. Read alſo (*1 Sam.* 10. 3.) As if the ſence were thus given; *O that I knew where I might finde him!* that is, *whither I might goe to meet him*, though I ſhould not finde him by accident, or (as we ſay) ſtumble upon him; I would goe out, I would travell, and take paines upon hopes to meet him.

Verbum מצא *ſignificat ſæpius obviam habere quemquam vel alicui obvium fieri.*

Secondly, That word ſignifies ſo to finde as to take hold and apprehend, to take faſt hold of a thing; and then, *O that I might finde him*, is, *O that I might lay hold on him*; if I knew where I might have him, I would lay faſt hold on him, and cleave cloſe to him. So the word is uſed (*Eſay* 10. 10) *As my hand hath found the kingdomes of the Idolls, and whoſe graven Images did excell them of Jeruſalem and Samaria.* Thus ſpake the proud Aſſyrian, *my hand hath found them*: Why, the Kingdoms of the Heathen were not in a Corner, that he had need to ſearch after them, he did not make a new diſcovery of thoſe kingdomes. They were not, *terra incognita*, an unknown or a *new found land*; that's not the meaning; but when he ſaith, *my hand hath found them*, the ſence is, I *have laid hold on them, and ceized them to my own uſe*, I *have added*

ded them to my own dominion, and brought them under my ſubjection. So in the 14 verſe of that Chapter; *My hand hath found as a Neſt the riches of the people*, that is, I have laid hold on their riches, and ſaid *all's mine*; I have taken the whole neſt with all the eggs, all their goods and treaſures, into my cuſtody and poſſeſſion. Thus *Job* would find God that he might lay hold on him for his owne or owne him as his. Thus alſo the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 21. 8.) *Thine hand ſhall finde out all thine Enemies, thy right hand ſhall finde out thoſe that hate thee.* It is not meant only of a diſcovery of a perſon (though it be a truth, that the Lord will diſcover all that are his Enemies) but *thine hand ſhall find them out*, is it ſhall take hold of them, graſpe them, and arreſt them. Thy hand ſhall find out all thine Enemies, though cloſe, though Covert Enemies, not only thy above-ground Enemies, but thy under-ground Enemies, as well thoſe that undermine thee, as thoſe that aſſault thee. Once more, in the 116th *Pſal.* ver. 3. we have an illuſtration of this ſence; *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.* The Hebrew text is, *the paines of hell found me: the paines of hell*, that is, the greateſt, the extreameſt paines, *gat hold upon me*; *they found me*, that is, they ſeized upon me, and held me faſt: a word of the ſame roote is uſed in both parts of that text, that which we tranſlate *to get hold*, is the ſame with that, *I found trouble and ſorrow*, they found me and I found them; thus ſaith *Job*, *O that I knew where I might find him!* that I might take hold of him; why how doth the hand of a Saint find God? how doth he take hold of and apprehend God? how doth he as it were arreſt him and keepe him cloſe? I anſwer, *By faith*, and reliance upon him; *O that I knew where to finde him!* that the Lord might not be at ſuch a diſtance from me, as he hath been, but that I finding him might fixe my ſoul upon him. That's a good ſence.

Yet I conceive in this place, we may rather expound *Job* ſpeaking of God after the manner of Magiſtrates among men, who appoint certaine places where to ſit in Judgement, where to hear Cauſes, whither all that are wronged and oppreſſed reſort for reliefe and right. (1 *Sam.* 7. 17.) *Samuel* was the Chiefe Magiſtrate, The Judge in *Iſrael*. Now the text ſaith at the 16th verſe, that *he went from year to year in Circuit* (as we have the Judges of the Circuit) *To Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and Judged*

Judged Iſrael in all thoſe places, and returned to Ramah, for there was his houſe, and there he Judged Iſrael; As if he had ſaid, *his ſtanding houſe* was at *Ramah* and thither all cauſes were brought, and all perſons grieved reſorted for Juſtice in their ſeverall caſes. He rid Circuit every yeare, that all the people might the more eaſily finde him; yet he had a fixed ſeate. In alluſion to this practice *Job* appealing from his friends to God ſaith, *O that I knew where I might find him!* and goe to him for Judgement; O that I might have Audience before him in this great buſineſſe.

But it may be ſaid, Did not *Job* know where to find God? or was *Job* out of the preſence of God?

I anſwer, the Lord carryed himſelfe to *Job* at that time as a ſtranger, and though he were with him (as he alwayes is with all his) yet he did not find him; The Lord is with many of his people when they are not with him, that is, when they do not find him, or are not ſencible of his preſence. God is with his people, even when they walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, yet they are not alwayes with God: yea God doth not alwayes manifeſt himſelfe to them while they walke in the moſt delicious and lightſome paradiſes of this life. God ſometimes hides himſelfe, ſo that they cannot make it out that God is preſent with them. God is never ſeene in regard of the inviſibility of his nature, and he is often unſeene in regard of the obſcurity of his diſpenſations: as *Job* ſhewes further at the 8th verſe, *Behold I goe forward but he is not there, & backward but I cannot perceive him.* I goe forward and backward, that is, I goe every way, I take all courſes to find him, but I cannot perceive God, for he hides and covers himſelf with clouds, that our prayers cannot come at him; as the Church complaines (*Lament.* 3. 44.) though we are alwayes preſent to God, yet God is not alwayes preſent to us, that is, to our apprehenſion; as God is not at all preſent to our ſenſe, ſo he is not alwayes preſent to our faith; that's the meaning of *Job*, when he ſaith, *I goe forward but he is not there*, &c God is every where: whither *can I goe from his preſence* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 139.) *If I goe up into heaven he is there* &c, yet ſaith *Job*, *if I goe forward he is not there*, that is, I have no Enjoyments of God there; and upon this ground he ſaith in the preſent text, *O that I knew where I might find him!* *Job* was well acquainted with the doctrine of Gods Omnipreſence, he was farre from thinking that there

there was any certaine place where God was fixt, and whether he muſt repaire as to the Kings and Princes of this world for helpe. *Job* knew better Divinity then this, he was acquainted with the nature and divine perfections of God, but he ſpeaks as to his preſent want, *O that* I *knew where* I *might finde him* !

Hence obſerve firſt ;

A godly man hath earneſt and longing deſires after God.

Whatſoever, or whomſoever he finds, he thinks he hath found nothing, or no body till he findes God ; *O that* I *might find him* ! How doth *David* (*Pſal.* 42. 1, 2.) ſhew his unſatisfiedneſs till he found God. *As the hart panteth after the water Brookes, ſo panteth my ſoule after thee, O God, my ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God, when ſhall* I *come and appeare before God ?* nothing but God was in his mouth, nothing in his deſire ; *David* had a kingdom, *David* had a Throne, *David* had honour & riches as much as he could deſire, why would not theſe ſatisfie his thirſt ? Could not he ſit downe in theſe Enjoyments ? no ! *David* was hungry and thirſty, and pineing, and empty, and ſtarveing, and dying, till he had God, till he had this ſpeciall Enjoyment of God ; for ſo we are to Expound that text, as this. *A wicked man can take up on this ſide God*, Cares not to find him, nay, is afraid to be found of him ; he then ſaith (according to the text touched before) as *Ahab* to *Elijah*, *Haſt thou found me O mine enemy* ? He would be glad if God would never find him, nor he finde God. (*Pſ.* 10. 4.) *The wicked through the pride of his Countenance will not ſeeke after God.* The ſeate of pride is in the heart, but the proſpect of pride is in the face ; *through the pride of his Countenance*, that is, by reaſon of that pride which doth diſcover it ſelf in his Countenance, which breakes out there, he will not *ſeeke after God*, his pride will not let him ſeeke after God. He that is proud, ſeeth not his need of God, and he that ſeeth not his need of God will never ſeeke after him. Such a one is ſo farre from longing after God, or ſaying, *O that* I *might know where* I *might find him*, that he will not ſo much as look after him, when he is told where he may be found. And not only ſo, but, *God is not in all his thoughts* ; or as ſome render it, *all his thoughts are, there is no God* ; yea not onely are all his thoughts, but all his hopes are, that there is no God, if he can but ſtrengthen himſelfe in the unbeleefe of a God, then

then he is well ; all the thoughts and hopes that pleaſe, and delight him are that there is no God, ſo farre is he from being ſolicitous to know God. *'Tis a condition equally ſad either when all a mans thoughts are, that there is no God, or when God is not in all his thoughts.* A wicked man may talke of God ſometimes, but God never comes neer his heart, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Jer.* 12. 2.) *Thou art neare in their mouth, but farre from their reines* ; that is from their deſires and delights. 'Tis what our reines ſay, not what our mouths ſay, that God reſpects. A Godly mans chiefe care is to be accepted with God, his thoughts are for God, and of God ; and were it not for this thought *that God is*, or that there is a God, and he a holy God, a juſt God, a gracious God, he would not thinke himſelfe (as we ſay) worth the ground he goes upon. And as all his thoughts are that there is a God, ſo all his hope and faith is in him, and his deſires are after him ; *O that I might finde him, enjoy him, graſpe him, take hold on him*, who is *The All* of my deſires and hopes and thoughts.

Secondly, obſerve ;

That a Godly man is ſometimes at a loſs for God, and cannot tell where to finde him.

He hath no ſenſibly ſpirituall Enjoyment of him ; The children of light often walk in darkneſſe ; They who fear the Lord much, may be without the feelings of his love, and they who obey his holy commandements without the comfort of his precious promiſes. Even Chriſt himſelf was at ſuch a loſſe for God, when he cryed out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me* (Pſal. 22. 1.) Chriſt being to ſuffer for ſinners, taſted of all thoſe ſorts of ſufferings which are due to ſin ; He endured not only the puniſhment of ſence in the paines of his body, but the puniſhment of loſſe in the hidings of his fathers comfortable preſence from his ſoule. If this were done to the Greene tree, much more to the dry, and if our head found an interruption of the preſence of God, much more may we, who are his members.

Thirdly, Obſerve ;

That while Saints are at a loſſe for God, their deſires are often quicker and more ſtirring after God.

It is a ſad thing not to finde God, but it is farre ſadder to have on-

no deſires after him: Unbeleevers are alwayes at a loſſe for God, they live without God in the world, ſuch a life is a very death, but this is more deadly that they have no deſires after God, that they make no enquiry, no ſearch after him. Though *Job* were at a loſſe for God, yet his heart was full of deſires to finde him; and God (I may ſay) is moſt deſireable to Saints while they are at a loſſe for him. Thus the Spouſe ſpeaks (*Cant.* 3. 1.) *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth, I ſought him but I found him not.* But becauſe ſhe found him not, when ſhe ſought him, did ſhe give over ſeeking him? No, her deſires of ſeeking and finding him were enflamed by her not finding him when ſhe ſought him; as it follows in the ſecond verſe, *I will riſe now and goe about the City in the ſtreets and in the broad wayes, I will ſeeke him whom my ſoule loveth, I ſought him but I found him not.* Thus her ſecond labour in ſeeking of him was loſt alſo. But doth not this quite diſcourage her, and kill her deſires after him? will ſhe not now give over ſeeking him? No not yet (*ver.* 3.) *The watchmen that goe about the City found me, to whom I ſaid, ſaw ye him whom my ſoule loveth?* She is ſtill enquiring and ſeeking, and at laſt ſhe found (*ver.* 4.) *It was but little that I paſſed from them but I found him, whom my ſoule loveth: I held him and would not let him go*, &c. Many who enjoy Chriſt have not ſuch ſtrong deſires after him as they who enjoy him not; as it is with other mercies, ſo with this, wch is the higheſt & chiefeſt, the ſum of all mercies, the Enjoyment of God, our deſires to him grow quicker upon his abſence, and we ſeldome prize his preſence as we ought, till he is departed or withdrawne from us.

Againe, we may conſider *Job* here in a very afflicted Condition, what doth he now? *O that I knew where I might finde him!*

Note, Fourthly;

God is moſt ſweet to an afflicted ſoule.

The preſence of God is ſweet, precious, and delicious to Saints at all times, but then ſweeteſt when they finde moſt bitterneſſe in the world. How pleaſant is the love of God when we are ſencible of mans hatred? Some good men have ſo much ſweetnes and love in the world, that they cannot ſo well reliſh or taſte the ſweetnes of the love of God; though indeed nothing argues the excellency of the ſpirit of a Saint, then this, that the ſence of the love of God to him, takes off the reliſh of all creature love, in the midſt of his higheſt Enjoyments of it. That ſoul is purely ſpirituall, which having abundance of worldly enjoyments, riches, friends, relations, all that he can deſire, yet in the affluence and higheſt float of all theſe can ſay, that the ſweetneſſe which he taſteth in God drownes the reliſh of all theſe, and makes them as taſteleſſe as the white of an Egge in compariſon of that ſweetneſſe which he hath taſted in the goodneſſe of God; this is ſpirituallneſſe in the very height of it; but uſually God is then ſweeteſt to us when the world is bitteреſt to us. *Afflicted ſoules make moſt haſt after God*; and it is well to do ſo; it is a very ſad ſigne, the worſt Symptome that can appear upon the ſoules of any, when affections draw them off from God, or when they grow cold in their affections towards God, while the love of the world growes cold towards them. The Prophet (*Amos* 6. 7.) foreſheweth a very great calamity that ſhould fall upon the people of God; *Thou ſhalt go Captive with the firſt that goe Captive*, &c. And in the 8 verſe; *The Lord God hath ſworn by himſelfe ſaith the Lord the God of hoſts, I abhorre the Excellency of Jacob, and hate his Palaces* (As if he had ſaid, though I have inveſted him with excellent priviledges, & though he make a great profeſſion of my name; yet becauſe of his provocations and unworthy walkings) *I will deliver up the City and all that is therein*, there's Captivity; then comes Peſtilence in the 9th verſe; *And it ſhal come to paſs, that if ten men remain in one houſe that they ſhall dye*; and they ſhall not bury them after the ordinary way, but burne them, and the neereſt relations ſhall do it. (*Ver.* 10.) *And a mans Uncle ſhall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring the bones out of the houſe, and ſhall ſay unto him that is by the ſides of the houſe, is there yet any with thee? and he ſhall ſay, no; then ſhall he ſay hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the Name of the Lord.* As if when all theſe evills and plagues were come upon them, they had been ſtopt or reſtrained from prayer, and totally withdrawn from God, by ſome prohibition from men, who were ſo far from calling the people to ſolicite God by prayer to take off his hand, that they forbid them ſo much as make mention of his name; As if they were either afraid or abhorred to mention the name of God, becauſe he had been ſo terrible among them in his Judgements. And whereas we tranſlate, *We may*

Extrema calamitas & abalienatio amicorum juſtum homine magis decet confugere ad Deum. Pined.

Diligentius diſquiruntur. Sen. l. 1. De.

Ne illum inter pelles neq; illũ tuis precibus sollicites, illius ve nomen aut memoriam usurpes qui tibi hæc mala fecit mandavit voluit. Pined.

not make mention of the names of the Lord. Our late Annotators take notice of two other readings. *We have not, or, we will not make mention of the name of the Lord*; Implying that the stop lay onely in their own spirits, they being either so generally wicked, that they had no minde to call upon God, or so unbeleeving that they thought their case desperate, and had no hope of help if they should. A Heathen hath said, *That their gods were most worshipped when most displeased*; but we have some Christians in name who will not worship God at all when they are under the tokens of his displeasure. Thoughts of God are never more pleasing to a gracious heart, nor more troublesome to a wicked, then when they are in trouble.

Fifthly, (which will further cleare what was last observed) Observe;

That, *The unkindnesse and trouble which a godly man findeth among his friends or others in the world, drives him neerer to God.*

Job besides the hardship he found from strangers, had been hardly used by his friends. The use which he made of all this, was to make more use of or to get neere unto God. *O that I knew where I might finde him.* This was *Davids* wisdome also (*Psal.* 142. 4, 5.) *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my soule.* When all slighted him, when none tooke care of him; what doth he in this case? The next words tells us what; *I cryed unto thee, O Lord, I said thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living.* As if he had said, Upon these unkindnesses, disrespects and slightings which I found in the world, I took occasion, yea I was stirred in my spirit to cry unto thee, O Lord, and to say, *thou art my refuge*, that is, then I made thee my refuge more then ever. Having made thee my choyce in my best times, when men honoured and embraced me, I am much encouraged in these evill times when men regard me not, and the more because they regard me not to make thee my refuge, to shelter my weather beaten selfe in thy name and power. As the naturall spirits in the body, when the aire is very sharpe, cold, and unkinde to the outward parts, retire inwards, resort to the heart, keep close to the heart; whereas in warmer weather the spirits are drawn forth, and therefore we are more subject to faintings and swoonings in hot weather then

then in cold; so when it is cold weather in the world, when it is as it were frost and snow, storme and tempest, then our spirituall spirits resort & come in to God, and keep close to him. When we have most friends in the world, or when the world is most friendly unto us, then God is our best friend; his favour is the most beneficiall and desireable favour, when we have as much as we can desire of favour among men. But when the world hates us and frownes upon us, especially when (as the Prophet speaks of some, *Isa.* 66.5) *Our Brethren hate us, and cast us out for the name sake of God himselfe, saying, let the Lord be glorified.* When 'tis thus with us (I say) our soules are even forced into the presence of God, to renew our interests in his love, and to assure our soules that we are accepted with him. If under such measure from men, we finde not helpe in God, we must remaine for ever miserable. God alone is enough, All without God is nothing to a Godly man. The fullnesse of the creature without God cannot satisfie him, and the utmost want of the creature cannot discontent him while he enjoyeth God; the more he wants in the creature, the more he seeketh his content in God, and when he findes nothing below, he cryeth out with greatest earnestnesse, *O that I knew where I might finde him*, whose throne is above, and who is the onely happinesse of man while he is below.

Sixthly, We see how Inquisitive *Job* was after God, as he had a desire and a minde to finde God, so he layes about him for information where and how to finde him.

Hence observe;

They who truly desire to finde God, are diligent in searching after him.

O that I knew (saith *Job*) *where I might finde him!* This was not an Idle wish; many are much in the *Optative mood*, full of wishings and wouldings; but their wishes are altogether wishes, and their desires nothing but desires; and such desires are killing desires; as *Solomon* hath taught us. *The desire of the sluthfull killeth him* (Prov. 21. 25.) an Idle desire is a death to the desirer; A godly mans desires are active desires, they put him upon enquiry, lead him to the meanes of enjoying the good desired. And though God be unexpectedly found of some that seeke him not, yet no man can expect to find God, but he that seeketh him.

 And

And indeed what ſhould the Creature do, but be upon an enquiry after God: there is a Naturality in it, he being the ſupream being, that we who have our being from him ſhould ſeeke after him. And the Apoſtle tells us (*Acts* 17. 26. 27.) that this is the deſigne of God in making of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the earth, and *determining the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation* (namely) *That they ſhould ſeeke the Lord, if happily they might grope after him and finde him, though he be not farre from every one of us, for in him we live*, &c. The Lord is neer all, he hath a preſence in all places, with all perſons, but the Lord would have all ſeeke, ſeeke, grope after him, even as ſuch have but a dim light of him, as thoſe have that doe not ſeeke ſo much with their eyes as with their hands, they only feel after the things which they would have. There is a light in the ſpirits of all men, that haply they may feel after God, and finde him; They who have not Scripture light, Goſpel light, the higheſt light, yet have ſome kinde or degree of light; they have ſome glimmerings though no cleare diſcernings. And that ſhould put them on to ſeek God, much more ſhould they ſeeke after him, who have cleareſt light. And where there is any heat of affection to God, a little light will ſerve them to ſeeke after him; *they that are true deſirers will be diligent ſeekers.* And they, who ſeeking God, have found him, will ſeeke him yet again, yea they will ſeeke him more and more, as long as there is any thing more of God to be found; And there will alwayes be more of God to be found; for here we know God but in part, and therefore have found him but in part. & hence it is that all the Saints in this life, or on this ſide Glory, even they of the higheſt forme and greateſt proficiency in grace and knowledge, are called *Seekers (this is the generation of them that ſeek him* (Pſal. 24. 6.) not ſuch ſeekers (as we find too many in theſe dayes) who, as if all were upon uncertainties in religion, ſay, they have as yet found nothing, for as there is ſomething wherein the moſt knowing and ſtrongeſt Chriſtians may be to ſeeke, ſo there are many things, yea all things neceſſary to ſalvation, or without which we cannot be ſaved, which the weakeſt may find and know ſufficiently, though not fully. And as they who deſire to find theſe things, will be diligent in ſeeking them, ſo they may know in themſelves, or be fully aſſured that they have found them; and ſo even while they ſtill

ſtill continue to be ſeekers, know that they are already Finders.

Laſtly, Obſerve;

God is every where, yet eſpecially ſome where to be found.

As there is a finding time, ſo there is a finding place, and finding meanes: There is a finding time, ſaith holy *David* (Pſal. 32. 6.) *For this ſhall every one that is godly pray to thee, in a time when thou mayeſt be found.* The Hebrew is, *in a finding time*; though I would not give any one a ſtop from ſeeking God at any time, yet I muſt ſay there is a ſpeciall *finding time.* And this the Apoſtle calls *the Accepted time* (2 Cor. 6. 2.) that is, *the time* which we ought to lay hold upon, or accept, as alſo, *the time*, wherein we ſhall be acceptable or finde acceptation. There is alſo a *finding place*, there is *a where* as well as *a when* God ſpecially is to be found, I mean it not of a meer locality, as if God were now to be found more in one place then in another; for *Paul* ſaith (1 *Tim.* 6. 8.) *I will that men every where lift up pure hands without wrath and doubting.* And Chriſt told the woman (*John* 4. 21.) *The houre cometh when ye ſhall neither in this Mountaine, nor yet at Jeruſalem worſhip the father*; not as if Chriſt had forbid the worſhip of the father in thoſe places for the time coming; but he enlargeth publick worſhip to all places, or abrogates all differences of place under the Goſpel as to the worſhip of the Father. Yet if any man ſhall enquire, where may I find God, or ſay as *Job* here, *O that I knew where I might find him!* I would anſwer; Firſt, Seeke him in his promiſes, ſearch the Scriptures, there you will finde God. Secondly Look for him in his Ordinances, of prayer and preaching, &c. for there he hath promiſed to be preſent; *Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them* (Math. 18. 20.) When the Church or Spouſe in the *Canticles* (Chap. 1. 7, 8.) Askes the Queſtion; *Tell me (O thou whom my ſoule loveth) where thou feedeſt? where thou makeſt thy flocks to reſt at Noone?* Chriſt her beloved, anſwers, *If thou know not (O thou faireſt among Women) goe thy way forth by the foote-ſteps of the flocke, and feed thy kids beſides the Shepherds tents*; That is, follow the holy practices and examples of the Saints in all former ages, which the Apoſtle calls *walking in the ſteps of the faith of Abraham* (Rom. 4 12.) And againe, hearken to the voice of faithfull Teachers, who as Shepherds feede the flock of

God

God with knowledge and underſtanding. Waite at theſe Shepherds tents (ſaith Chriſt) and there thou ſhalt finde a preſence of God with thee, and his bleſſing upon thee.

Thirdly, And above all, *Seeke God in Chriſt*; The father is onely to be found in the Sonne; Look to Jeſus Chriſt, and in him you cannot but behold God; for he is *the brightneſſe of his glory, and the expreſſe image of his perſon* (Heb. 1. 3.) and therefore as he that hath the Son hath the Father alſo, ſo he that (by an eye of faith, and in the light of the Word and Spirit) beholdeth the Son beholdeth the Father alſo. *For the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is given us in the face of Jeſus Chriſt* (2 Cor. 4. 6.) The light of the knowledge of the goodneſſe of God, of his mercy, Juſtice, holines (which are his glory) ſhineth forth from Jeſus Chriſt; that is, in and by Chriſt it appeares gloriouſly, that God is exceeding good, mercifull, juſt, & holy. Therefore to every wearied ſoul complaining of the loſt of God, and crying out, *O that I knew where I might finde him!* The ſumme of all the Counſell that I can give, or indeed that can be given is this; Seek God in Chriſt, and he will be found. *O that I knew where I might find him,*

That I might come even to his ſeate.

Some conceive theſe words as the iſſue of a diſtempered ſpirit: others tax *Job* with too much boldneſs, that he being but duſt and aſhes ſhould thus preſſe upon God, and that he was afterwards reproved for it in the 38th Chapter of this Booke, verſe the firſt and ſecond, *Then the Lord anſwered Job out of the whirlewinde and ſaid* (there he found him) *who is this that darkeneth Councell by words without knowledge, gird up now thy loynes like a man, for I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me.* And againe, in the 40th Chapter, *ver.* 2, 3, 4, 5. *Shall he that Contendeth with the Allmighty inſtruct him, he that reproveth God let him anſwer it. Then Job anſwered the Lord and ſaid; Behold I am vile, I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer, yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* As if he had acknowledged his error and overboldneſſe in preſſing upon God; as in other places, ſo alſo in this; *O that I might come even to his ſeate.*

Yet I conceive that *Job* in this paſſage, doth but put forth the nobler and higher actings of his faith, and that he ſpeaks this, not

not as forgetting the diſtance of duſt and aſhes, from the glory of God, or from the glorious God, but as remembring the promiſe, and as inſiſting upon his priviledge as a beleever who is invited to come, and to come with boldneſſe to the throne of Grace. For though that promiſe was not given out as to the formality of it in thoſe times, yet the vertue of it was, though in a lower degree then now. To come with boldneſſe to the throne of grace, ſounds much like this, *to come even to his ſeate*, and this *Job* did not onely as emboldned by the clearnes of his conſcience towards men, but as by the freeneſſe of the Grace of God in Chriſt towards him. In purſuance whereof it is well conceived by a learned Interpreter, that there is a metonymie, in the word which ſignifies *a prepared ſeate*, that is, ſuch a ſeate as whereon God preſents himſelf to poore ſinners, prepared and ready to give them both admittance to himſelfe and a gracious audience of their requeſts and ſuites. The word which we tranſlate *ſeate*, ſignifieth *a prepared place, a place fitted*, implying ſomewhat ſpeciall and peculiar unto God. Heaven is called *the habitation of his holineſs and of his glory* (*Eſay* 63. 15.) yet whereſoever the Lord is, he makes it a heaven. Thus alſo he can make any place where he is a hell. *The wicked ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting fire from the preſence of the Lord*, (2 *Theſ.* 1. 9.) that is, the very preſence of the Lord ſhall be a hell and torment to them. The Lord can be both terrible and gracious in his preſence any where; yet he is ſomewhere more graciouſly, ſome where more terribly preſent. Some cannot bear thoſe expreſſions, *The Throne of God, the ſeat of God, heaven, and hell.* As if theſe were but the Imaginations, fancies and fictions of mans braine. But the Lord hath his ſeates and dwelling places, whence and where he declares himſelfe, both in mercy and in judgement, both in his holineſſe and in his glory. (*Iſa.* 6. 1.) *I ſaw alſo the Lord ſitting upon his Throne, high and lifted up.* Thus the Lord manifeſted himſelf in viſion to the Prophet; and *David* confeſſeth, *Thy Throne O God is for ever and ever* (Pſal 45 6.) that is, thy Power and Soveraignty. *David* ſpeakes not of a materiall Throne ſuch as Kings have; the Power and Soveraignty of God are his throne whereſoever he is, and is pleaſed to declare himſelf in his ſoveraignty and power. So that when *Job* ſaith *O that I might come even to his ſeate or throne*, the meaning is, O that I might come as neere him as poſſibly I may.

תכונה *denotat locum præparatum a radice* כון *In voce* תכונה *puto eſſe metonymiam, q. d. uſque ad locum in quo ipſe promptus paratuſq; eſt ad audiendum ubi ſui copiam facit.* Coc. *Repreſentat deum tanquam ſupremum Judicem in ſolio excelſo ſedentē. uſq; dum omnia cauſ's reddentem.* Bold.

I would not ſtand at a diſtance, or keepe aloofe off, as a guilty malefactor, but draw neere to him in a holy and well-grounded confidence. Thus *Job* ſpeakes in anſwer to that Charge of *Eliphaz* in the former Chapter, *Is not thy wickednesse great, and thine iniquities infinite?* Now (ſaith *Job*) you ſhall ſee what my ſins are, and what my guilt, ſeeing I dare venture even to the very throne of God, where no hypocrite dares appeare. While *Job* profeſſeth, That if God after the manner of men ſhould ſit in open Judgement (there will be ſuch a Judgement at the laſt day) he would come neer to him, and not be afraid, he ſeemes fully aſſured of his owne integrity, or of the goodneſſe of his cauſe, as alſo that God would be good unto him.

Hence obſerve;

That true holines and uprightnes hath abundance of Confidence before God.

Adam having ſinned, and the guilt of his ſin being upon him, durſt not come to the Seat, to the Throne of God. God came to him in the cool of the day to examine and queſtion him about his ſin, but he hid himſelfe among the trees of the garden, he withdrew, not daring to abide him: and that's the ſtate of all ſinners, who have the guilt of ſin upon them, they hide, they run from God, when once their Conſciences are awakened. *As ſin in the act of it is a turning or departure from the holines of God, ſo ſin acted or ſin in the guilt of it cauſeth not onely a departure but a running and a hiding from the juſtice of God.* Guilty ſinners are ſo far from coming up to his Seat, that they cannot endure to come in his ſight; a malefactor hath little minde to come before the Judge, or to the Bench where the Judge ſitteth. *Solomon* ſaith (*Pro.* 20. 8.) *A king that ſitteth in the Throne of Judgement, ſcattereth away all evill with his eyes.* We may underſtand it thus, he ſcattereth evill actions, and evill perſons, evill workes and evill workers *with his eyes*; there's not an evill man willing to appear, or that dares to appeare before him. *They who are ſelf-condemned, muſt needs be afraid that others will condemne them alſo.* Magiſtrates ſitting in Judgement are terrible to guilty malefactors. Or thus, *He ſcattereth the evill with his eyes*; that is, he makes evill men reveale and ſcatter their moſt ſecret evills, by his prying inro them, and induſtrious Examination of them; that evill or wicked

wicked practice which they had bound up in their hearts, and ſaid, none ſhall know it, he ſcatters and diſcovers. *Solomons* proverb carryes an experienced truth in it both wayes. And we may argue from it, That if an earthly King or Magiſtrate, *ſitting on the Throne ſcattereth all evill with his eyes, how much more doth God?* neither any evill matter, nor any evill man can ſtand before him. And ſeeing the Lord diſcovers all the evil that is in the hearts and wayes of men, what can give perfect boldneſſe in coming to the Throne of God, but onely an Intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, in whom the Throne of God is become a Throne of grace to ſinners? Were it only a Throne of Judgement and Juſtice, *no fleſh could ſtand before it*, but being a Throne of grace, the worſt of ſinners, who wait for grace, may come neer, and the neerer they come the welcomer they are. A godly man is never better then when he is neer God, and then thinks himſelfe beſt when he is neereſt unto God; all his happineſſe in this life and his glory in that which is to come, doth conſiſt in his neerneſſe unto God.

Secondly, Whereas *Job* ſaith; *O that I might come even to his Seat.* Obſerve.

A Godly man is willing that God ſhould Judge both his Perſon and his Cauſe.

That's the deſigne of *Job*, he had appealed from the Judgement of his friends, and begd the Judgement of God; He was reſolute in it, to ſtand or fall according to his ſentence. But why was *Job* ſo deſirous of the Judgement of God? why would he goe to his Throne, and appeale to him? When men make appeals from one Throne to another, they have their reaſons for it; When *Paul* ſaid *I appeale to Cæſar* (Act 25. 11.) doubtleſs he was fully perſwaded that he ſhould find better terms with *Cæſar* then among the *Jews*; So when *Job* ſaith, I appeal to God (which is the higheſt appeal, and beyond which there lyes no appeale) doubtleſſe *Job* was fully perſwaded that he ſhould finde better termes at Gods tribunall, then he had found among his friends. And *Job* might have many grounds of better termes from God. For

Firſt, God is wiſe, even a God of Judgement, who would not receive Judgement from a wiſe and underſtanding Judge, eſpecially from him who is wiſdome and underſtanding.

Secondly, God is Omniſcient; there are many wiſe Judges, but

but no Omniſcient Judges in the world. Princes are ſaid to have long hands, and very cleare eyes, they can reach farre, and ſee farre, but they cannot ſee all; but God is able to Judge the ſecrets of all hearts, for he ſees all ſecrets, and knowes what man cannot. For that reaſon a godly man loves the Judgement of God, becauſe he knowes his heart; And for the ſame reaſon wicked men, hypocrites eſpecially, are afraid of the Judgement of God: they know if their outward actions ſhould come to be ſcan'd, much more if their hearts ſhould be turn'd outward, it muſt needs goe ill with them. Moſt hypocrites carry it faire onely for a while before the world they at laſt diſcover themſelves the diſeaſe breaks out at their fingers ends, or at their tongues end; Their words or works diſcover the rottenneſſe of their hearts, and the formality of their profeſſion. But ſome hypocrites carry it faire to the world all their dayes, and feare not the Judgement of men, yet even then a thought of the Judgement of God is dreadfull to them, whereas the Saints, even all who are ſincere, deſire God to judge them; for indeed their hearts are better then their wayes, and their affections then their actions, and they know that God diſcernes with what heart and ſpirit every thing is done, as well as what is done. He doth not Judge by appearances (as we ought not, *Joh.* 7.24.) and therefore his is a righteous Judgement. God doth not judge things as they appear, but as they are, unleſſe they are as they appear, and whatſoever their appearance is, he can judge them as they are. He can judge by diſcerning what is in the deep, and follow a matter to the very ſpring of it; therefore I'le go to God (ſaith the upright heart) my deſire is that he ſhould Judge my cauſe.

Thirdly, The Lord is a gracious and a mercifull Judge; he is as full of pity as he is of wiſdome, and as ready to relieve as he is quick ſighted to diſcerne.

Fourthly, The Lord is very patient: Firſt, patient to heare; and ſecondly, patient to beare. Patience to heare is a great encouragement; many Judges are weary of the work, they will not heare a poor man out, but God will; and God is patient alſo to beare with and paſſe by the failings of his people, whoſe uprightneſſe he knowes.

Laſtly, A Godly man knowes that God his Judge hath received an atonement, that *he is made for him*, and upon grounds of Juſtice

Juſtice and righteouſneſſe is become his friend. Some who have bad Cauſes, yet come unto the Throne of man boldly, becauſe they know the Judge is *made for them* by a bribe, and ſo will give ſentence on their ſide, be it right or wrong. Saints know that the Judge is *made for them*, but made in a holy manner, not with baſe bribery to blinde his eyes to pervert juſtice, but he hath received an atonement, he is appeas'd and ſatisfied by a Mediator at his owne appointment. If God ſhould ſearch the beſt of Saints narrowly, they muſt needs fall in judgement, yet they know they ſhall ſtand in judgement, becauſe the Judge is reconciled to them by Chriſt, yea Chriſt who made the Atonement, and is the reconciler, is the Judge, this encourageth Saints to come to God; *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we ſhall be ſaved by his life* (Rom. 5. 10.) The caſe ſtanding thus with beleevers, who ſeeth not ground for their appeale from the judgement, either of open enemies, or (as *Job* did) miſtaken Friends; *O that I might come even to his ſeat.*

In the two next verſes, *Job* tells us what he would doe if his appeale were granted and himſelfe admitted to the ſeate of God.

Verſ. 4. *I would order my Cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.*

Verſ. 5. *I would know the words which he would anſwer me, and underſtand what he would ſay unto me.*

Thus he deſcribes his intended behaviour before his Judge, in alluſion to legall proceedings, where the *Plantiff* brings in his bill, and the *Defendant* his anſwer.

I would order my Cauſe before him.

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate *to order*, is a military terme, properly uſed for the ordering of an Army, or the putting of them into a poſture for a battell, we call it *Marſhalling an Army*. And hence it is applyed to the ordering of any other thing (*Pſal.* 23. 5.) *Thou wilt prepare a Table for me in the midſt of mine enemies*, to order a Table is to ſet diſh by diſh, there is a kinde of method in ſetting diſhes at great feaſts; *Thou wilt prepare*

ערב *eſt militare verbum quod proprie dicitur de aciebus quæ certa ratione ac ordine diſponuntur.*

pare a Table for me. Again (*Pſ.*50.21.) God ſpeaks to the hypocrite about his ſinfull doings; *I will ſet them in order before thee*; that is, thoſe ſins, and confuſed practices of which thou haſt ſaid in thy heart, I ſhall never heare more of them, ſhall be brought forth and ſet like a terrible Army in ranke and file before thee. *Job* ſpeaks to this ſence, *I would order my cauſe before him*, or, *to his face*, as the Hebrew Text hath it, that is, in his preſence.

And fill my mouth with arguments.

Plenè ac fidenter, confidenter pro me dicam. Bold.

I would have arguments enow or good ſtore to prove that your proceeding hath been unequall toward me; And when he ſaith; *I would fill my mouth with arguments*, it ſhews that his heart was full of arguments, Chriſt teacheth us to argue ſo (*Luke* 6.45.) *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*; *Jobs* heart was full, therefore he would fill his mouth, *David* prayeth (*Pſ.* 71. 8.) *Let my mouth be filled with thy praiſe.* And the Church ſpeaks of her joy when God had turned their captivity, (*Pſal.* 126. 2.) *Then was our mouth filled with laughter.* In this language God beſpeaks his people (*Pſal.* 81. 10.) *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* Open it by faith, and I will fill it, with what? fill it with mercy, and with bleſſings. So here; *I would fill my mouth with arguments*; that is, I would not want matter to ſpeake for my ſelfe, or in my owne cauſe. The vulgar reades it, *I will fill my mouth with Chidings, or, with reproofs.* The word properly ſignifies, *Conviction*; and then we are to underſtand it in reference to his friends; I would abound with convincing, reproving, or chiding arguments againſt you, who, have thus long reproached me; I would bring ſuch arguments as ſhould not onely be a proofe of mine own integrity, but a reproof of my friends ſeverity. Some arguments have only a proof in them; others have a reproof too. *Job* would fill his mouth with arguments, which ſhould be both proofs for himſelfe, and reproofs to his oppoſers. *Job* had not a word to ſay againſt God, but he had much to ſay againſt his friends, *I would fill my mouth with Arguments.*

Di meum repleo increpationibus. Vulg.

תוכחות *rationes redargutiones intelligi quibus Deum rejicere accuſaret ſed rationes quibus ſe tueretur.* Sic βλασφημία & ἔλεγχος *Græcis ſignificat.* Merc.

Note from it:

Troubled ſpirits have many things to ſay, and uſually abound much in their own ſence.

Furor arma miniſtrat.

As the paſſion of anger will adminiſter weapons to a man though he be no great fighter, ſo thoſe paſſions of grief and ſorrow will adminiſter arguments to him though he be no great diſputer. A troubled ſoule will hardly be put to a ſtand or *non plus*, They who ſuffer much will alwayes have ſomewhat to ſay; *If nature deny* (ſaid one of old) *yet Indignation will make a man a Poet*: And if nature deny, yet ſorrow will make a man a Logician; and trouble will make a man an Advocate in his owne cauſe. The tongues of many are tipt with Oratory, they have excellent words and ſtrong reaſons too from the preſſures that are upon their ſpirits: trouble of ſpirit fills the mouth with Arguments two wayes.

Firſt, Againſt themſelves, how ſtrongly will ſome in that caſe diſpute againſt their own peace? what arguments will they bring againſt any comfort that is offered them; and how nimbly will they reply to any one that goes about to anſwer them? how will they find out new *mediums*, when thoſe are foyled by which they have formerly nouriſhed their unbeleefe, and diſcouraged themſelves from taking hold on mercy. 'Tis wonderfull to heare the pleadings of a troubled ſpirit; and 'tis one of the hardeſt taskes in the world to anſwer the doubts which ſuch a man will make againſt himſelfe.

Secondly, The troubles of many fills their mouths with arguments for themſelves; that's the meaning of *Job* here in this place; *I would fill my mouth with arguments* to maintaine my Cauſe; I ſhould not want either matter or words, to plead this buſineſſe, were I before the Throne of God, and yet I would not be ſo free and forward to ſpeak, as to neglect or ſlight what is ſpoken to me, as it followes.

Verſ. 5 *I would know the words that he would anſwer me, and underſtand what he would ſay unto me.*

Some are ſo haſty to ſpeake, that they will not heare, they are ſo forward to plead their own Cauſe, that they will not receive the opinion of another. *Job* diſcovers an equall ſpirit to both; *As I would order my Cauſe, and fill my mouth with arguments, ſo I would know the words that he would anſwer me too*, I would have the good manners, or the grace rather, to heed and *underſtand what God would ſay to me.*

The

Ὑπόμνημα τῶν ῥημάτων ἃ ἐρεῖ πρός με. Sept. Ἀντὶ τοῦ, ἵνα γνῶ τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐρεῖ μοι. Chryſoſt.

The Septuagint render it thus; *I would know the healings which he would ſpeak to me*; or as another, *What medicine or way of cure he would præſcribe and adminiſter to me*, and this might reſpect either the quieting of his Spirit, or the repayring of his credit and good name, which had been ſorely and deeply wounded by his friends, not only ſuſpecting but charging him as an hypocrite or wicked man. This is a fayre ſence, onely it ſtraitens the Text; For we may ſuppoſe *Job* in this addreſſe and application to God ready to hear whatſoever God ſhould ſay unto him, whether his were words of approbation or reproof, whether for him or againſt him. Though *Job* had (doubtleſſe) a ſtrong confidence, that God would approve of him and give ſentence on his ſide, yet conſidering his owne weakneſſes and diſtempers of minde, he might well conceive that ſome things had fallen from him or been done by him which might deſerve and call for chidings and rebukes as the iſſue indeed was. And therefore it was moſt congruous that he ſhould preſent himſelf before the Lord in a frame of heart to receive reprehenſions as well as conſolations. *I would know the words that he would anſwer me, and underſtand*, &c.

Knowing and underſtanding, may be taken here two wayes; Firſt, for Conſidering and weighing what God would ſay, or what Award he would make; In which he ſeems cloſely to check his friends who thought him ſo dull and incapable, that ſurely he did not apprehend nor underſtand their anſwers. Well (ſaith *Job*) whatſoever you think of my dulneſſe to underſtand your anſwers, or what you have ſaid, yet I doubt not but I ſhall underſtand the anſwers of God, or what he ſhall ſay unto me.

Secondly, They note a reverence and reſpect to the word of God; *I would know the words that he would anſwer*; that is, ſubmit to them, I would not oppoſe the Judgement or Opinion of God concerning me. Though *Job* did not ſit down or acquieſſe in the judgement of his friends, yet he would reverence and ſit downe quietly in the judgement of God, and in the anſwer which he ſhould pleaſe to give. In either of theſe interpretations, the ſence is good. *I would know*; that is, I would ſtudy to find out the mind of God, and underſtand what he ſaith to me, and then reverently ſubmit thereunto.

Further, This forme of ſpeaking, *I would know the words, and I would underſtand*, &c. ſeemeth to imply a vehement deſire in *Job* to know the minde of God concerning him. As a man that is accuſed longs to hear the minde of the Judge, as for others 'tis not much to him what they ſay for him or againſt him. As *Paul* ſpake in a like caſe (1 *Cor.* 4. 3.) *With me it is a very ſmall thing to be judged of you, or of mans judgement*, &c. *he that judgeth me is the Lord*; that is, to his judgement I muſt ſtand; He is above all.

Hence note.

First, *That a godly man is carefull to underſtand the anſwer and determinations of God concerning him.*

I would know the words that he would anſwer me, and this not onely (according to the ſuppoſition which *Job* makes here) if God ſhould ſpeake to him perſonally, or mouth to mouth; but in what way ſoever God ſhould ſpeake to him. It is the great care of a Godly man to know the word of God written and deliver'd over to us, as the rule of our life and faith; for indeed therein we have our judgement, and our anſwer: as Chriſt ſaith, *the words that I ſpeake, they ſhall judge you at the laſt day*; that is, by the word you ſhall be judged. Likewiſe it is the care of a Godly man to underſtand what God ſpeakes to him by his workes and providences, by his rods and chaſtnings. In theſe the Lord ſpeakes to us and gives us anſwers. They who are wiſe, will ſtudy to know and underſtand them. We may conceive that *Job* had reſpect to two things eſpecially, about which he deſired that he might underſtand the anſwer, and words of God to him.

First, That God would ſhew him the true Cauſe of his affliction; for he did not take that to be the Cauſe which his friends had ſo often ſuggeſted, and ſo diſputed upon that *Fallacy* all along, which Logicians call, *The putting of that for a Cauſe which is not the Cauſe*. Therefore *Job* hoped to know of God what he would ſay, as to the reaſon why he did Contend with him.

Secondly, What God would ſay to him by way of Direction and Councell, by way of remedy and redreſs, he was ſollicitous to underſtand the minde of God, and what God expected from him under this diſpenſation. So that *Jobs* ſcope was not at all (as *Eliphaz* ſuſpected) to plead his owne righteouſneſſe and holy walkings before God, as if God had been beholding to him for them, and ſo muſt needs grant him (as having deſerved it) whatſoever he ſhould aske. But that he might be acquainted with the holy will

will and purpoſe of God concerning himſelf, and to be inſtructed by him about the grounds and ends of his long and ſharp affliction, that ſo he might bear it more chearfully, and more fruitfully. As alſo (and that principally) that he might heare from his Majeſty which was the great poynt in controverſie between him and his friends) whether he did correct and chaſten him as a ſon, or puniſh and take vengeance on him, as on a rebell; and ſo ſet him among the examples of caution for ſinners in time to come.

Secondly, Note.

A Godly man reſts in the Judgement of God.

Si res ipſam ſpectet, omnis homo mendax eſt; ſi autem cum Deo veraci in judicium veniat, ſententiam ejus. Scult.

Job would not reſt in his friends judgement, but in Gods judgement he would reſt, and enquire no further; I (ſaith he) freely yeeld up my ſelfe to that; if the Lord ſhould pronounce me Innocent, I would reſt in his ſentence, and be thankfull; if the Lord ſhould pronounce me faulty, yet I would reſt in his ſentence, and be patient; yea then I would aske mercy and begge his grace for the pardon of my faylings. God is an Infallible Judge, and therefore no man ought to queſtion his determinations; Indeed, *Every mouth ſhall be ſtopped, & all the world become guilty before God* (Ro. 3.19.) that is, ackrowledge themſelves guilty before him when he judgeth. And as there is no avoiding the judgement of God, ſo a godly man deſires to rejoyce in it. *Good is the word of the Lord*, ſaid *Hezekiah* (2 Kings 20.19.) When a very ſore ſentence was paſt againſt him, *and he ſaid, is it not Good? if peace and truth be in my dayes?* By *good* in the former part of the verſe, he meanes juſt and equall: as if he had ſaid, though this word be full of gall and wormewood, yet it is no other then I and my people have deſerved and drawne upon our ſelves: By *good* in the latter part of the verſe, he meanes Gracious and merciſull; as if he had ſaid, God in this ſentence hath mixed the *good* of juſtice and equity, with the *good* of graciouſneſs and mercy, or in the midſt of Judgement he hath remembred mercy. Thus alſo when God gave ſentence by fire againſt the two ſons of *Aaron*; *Moſes ſaid to Aaron*; *This is that the Lord ſpake, ſaying, I will be ſanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified* (Lev. 10.3.) Now when *Aaron* heard this, the text ſaith; *And Aaron held his peace.* He murmured not, he contradicted not, but reſted patiently in the judgement of God. And thus *Job* was reſolved to give

give himſelfe up to the judgement of God whatſoever it ſhould be. And we ſhall finde him (in the next words) hoping ſtrongly to finde God very ſweet and gracious to him, could he but obtain a hearing at his *Judgement ſeate.*

JOB, CHAP. 23. Verſ. 6, 7.

Will he plead againſt me with his great power? No, but he would put ſtrength in me.

There the righteous might diſpute with him: ſo ſhould I be delivered for ever from my Judge.

JOB ſtill proſecutes the proof of his integrity from his willingneſſe to appear before God, and plead his caſe at his throne; and as in the two former verſes he told us what he would doe upon ſuppoſition that he could finde God, and have acceſſe unto him, even that he would ſtate his caſe, and then *fill his mouth with arguments*; he would alſo ſeriouſly attend and ſtrive to underſtand the anſwer which God ſhould give him. So in theſe two verſes, he holds out what entertainment he aſſured himſelfe of, in this his addreſſe to God, as alſo what confidence he had of a fair hearing and of a good iſſue; As if he had ſaid, *O Eliphaz you have often deterred and over-awed me with the Majeſty of God, as if he would certainly cruſh ſuch a worme as I am, and that I could not at all ſtand or abide a tryall before him in Judgement* (Eliphaz hath ſpoken to that ſenſe at the 4th verſe of the former Chapter) *will he reproove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgement?* doſt thou thinke that God will condeſcend ſo farre, as to treate with thee) *but know, O Eliphaz, that I am not afraid of the preſence of God; for, though I confeſſe, if God ſhould put forth his power, I were not able to hold up my head before him, and that he could eaſily overthrow me with a breath, yet I am perſwaded he will take a more favourable courſe, and deale with me in mercy, not with rigour or ſeverity.*

Vers. 6. *Will he plead against me with his great power?*

I know he is cloathed with Majesty, and that the greatnesse of power is his; but will he plead against me with it? The Hebrew text is, *will he plead with me, to plead with and to plead against are the same.* To *plead* is a Law terme. He that pleadeth against another, discovers either the faultinesse of his person when accused, or the weaknesse of his Title when controverted. This word is used by the Prophet (*Isa.* 57. 16.) *I will not contend* (or plead) *for ever.* I will not argue my owne prerogative, nor will I argue thy sinfullnesse alwayes, or without end; why not? if I should, *the spirit would faile before me, and the souls which I have made*; where, though spirit and soule are put synechdochically for the whole man, that is, for flesh and spirit, for soule and body together, yet the Lord mentions only spirit and soule, because of their strength to beare divine contendings beyond the body or the flesh. As if he had said, even that which is strongest in man would fayle, if God should alwayes contend.

ירוב *contendet quasi de jure suo ut illud exigat.*

חברב בח *Nam copia cui roboris, &c.*

Will he plead against me with his great power? or strictly to the Letter, *with the multitude of his power, with the forces of his power.* The power of God is great, yea the power of God is greatest, all his power is almighty power, yet God doth not alwayes put forth the greatnesse of his power; He is a most free agent, and so can restraine and hold in his own power, when he pleaseth, and not use it to the terror of a poore creature, or plead against him with it.

Againe, The power of God may be taken two wayes; First, for his strength, or his power of doing and executing; secondly, for his prerogative authority, or his power of commanding and ruling; we may interpret it here of the latter; will God deale with me by his prerogative power; thinke you? will he oppresse me with his meere authority? I have another opinion of God; surely he will not do so; For he is good and gracious, and he will attemper his prerogative with pity, & his great power with much mercy. *Will he plead against me with his great power? Jobs* question is a confident negation (such negative interrogations are frequent in Scripture) *will he?* is, *he will not plead against me with his great power*, but *Job* is not satisfied that his speech carrieth a negation in it, and therefore lest any should not fully enough understand

Per multã dei fortitudinẽ potentiam eius absolutam (summum jus dici solet) intelligũt multi. Bold.

stand him so, he expresseth his negative; *will he plead with me with his great power no, His power is not, nor ever will it be against me.* He will take some other course with me, he will deale with me upon the account of goodnes and mercy, not upon the account of power; He will not break me a bruised reed, nor quench me who am but smoaking flax, he will rather bind me up and cherish the least sparke which he perceiveth alive in me. *Will he plead against me with his great power?*

Hence observe;

First, *God hath great power, much power, All power is his.*

The power of men and Angels is his; What power soever, whether for kinde or degree, is in the hand of any creature, that power belongs to God. Thus *David*, a man of Great power, states it, *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, That power belongeth unto God.* The power that is scattered and divided all the world over is centred and united in him. God hath a greatness of power, in commanding and disposing what and how things shall be done, he also hath a greatness of power in doing and executing what he hath commanded, The commands of men are often unperformed, either because they to whom their commands are sent have no power to performe them, or because they want power to backe their owne commands. We may consider the Greatnesse of the power of God severall wayes.

First, As he can doe all things, and is omnipotent, there is nothing too hard for him, his hand is not shortned in reference to the longest or the greatest workes, and difficulties. And as he can doe whatsoever he hath a will to doe, so he will doe whatsoever he pleaseth to have done, whatsoever he purposeth to doe, whatsoever is upon his heart to doe: none of his counsells ever fayled, nor have any of the thoughts of his heart been frustrated. Men often purpose to doe, but they seldome have power to doe what they have purposed; they are bigge with the conceptions of many great matters, but when the children come to the birth, they have no strength to bring forth. God never failes in his power to doe whatsoever he hath a purpose or a minde to do. God hath power enough to back his commands, and he can supply power to those whom he calleth to execute them.

Secondly, The greatnesse of Guds power is seene in this; that

 He

He hath a right to doe all that he doth. As he hath a fullneſſe of ſtrength, ſo a fullneſſe of Authority, he doth not uſurp or intrench upon any other power in what he doth, nor upon any mans property in what he hath; it is his due to doe what he doth, and to have what he hath. God is ſupream, giving the Law to all, receiving the Law from none; his is not a tyrannicall, but a juſt and a righteous power; his is not a might without right, but a might with right. What the Prophet ſpeakes of the *Chaldeans* (Hab. 1. 7.) is true of God in every ſence, in the ſtricteſt ſence; *His judgement and his dignity proceedeth of himſelfe*; he is a law unto himſelfe, his rule is internall, and his power intrinſecall. All derive power from him, therefore his power is altogether underived. Power underived muſt needs be great power, yea the Greatneſſe of power.

Thirdly, The greatneſſe of his power appeareth further in this, *that no man may preſume to queſtion him for what he doth.* He hath great power in what he doth, whom none may ſo much as aske what doſt thou? *Nebuchadnezzar* (a heathen in higheſt earthly power) confeſſeth as much of the power of God, as ſoon as he regained the reaſon of a man (*Dan.* 4. 34 35.) *At the end of the dayes* (that is, after the terme of ſeaven yeares was accompliſhed, when for the heart of a beaſt a mans heart was reſtored to him) *I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes to heaven, and mine underſtanding returned unto me, and I bleſſed the moſt high, and I praiſed and honoured him that liveth for ever, whoſe dominion is an everl. ſting dominion, and his kingdome is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he d th according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* that is, none may ſo much as queſtion, much leſſe reprove him for any thing that he doth. Though there are many who in the pride of their hearts, and through the forgetfulneſſe of their duty, will preſume to queſtion God about what he hath done, and even controule his doings, yet of right or according to rule none can. Hence the Apoſtle having aſſerted the ſoveraignty of God, *he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth*, brings in ſome queſtioning his proceedings; but he checks them ſoundly for their boldnes in queſtioning, and inſtructs them by many upbrayding queſtions, that they ought not

not to put that or any ſuch queſtion.) *Thou wilt ſay then* (v. 18, 19, 20.) *why doth he yet finde fault, for who hath reſiſted his will? nay but who art thou ô man that replieſt againſt God, ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus? hath not the potter power over the clay, of the ſame lump to make one veſſell of honour, and another of diſhonour?* what if God were willing to ſhew his wrath in ſome, as well as his grace & mercy in others, what have you or I to doe with it? who gave you or I leave to examine God upon intergatoryes about it? Thus he pleads the power or prerogative of God, this muſt ſilence all our queries, and ſatisfie all our doubts; none may aske him a reaſon of what he doth; the reaſon is in himſelfe. The will of God is his reaſon; and there is all the reaſon in the world it ſhould; for his is not only a ſoveraigne will, but a juſt and a holy will. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 8. 4.) *Where the word of a king is, there is power, and who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* In all lawfull adminiſtrations, it is true of kings and ſupream earthly powers, in what forme ſoever, none may ſay unto them what doe yee? their word muſt ſtand; much, more is this true of him who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who is the ſupream power of heaven and earth; all whoſe wayes are equall, and his diſpenſations righteous, though we ſee not the equity and righteouſneſſe of them. That, is not onely great, but the greateſt power, which *none may queſtion.*

Fourthly. This alſo demonſtrates the greatneſs of Gods power, that none can ſtop or hinder him in what he hath a minde to doe; what he appoints, he executes; and none can ſtop it, or as (*Nebuchadnezzar* ſpeaks in the place before mentioned, *Dan.* 4. 35.) *ſtay his hand.* The hand of the ſtrongeſt power upon the earth may be, and hath been ſtaid; kings have had a check, their hands have been ſtaid, but none can ſtay the hand of God; *I will work* (ſaith he) *and none ſhall let it* (Iſa. 43. 17.) God ſhould doe but little worke in the world, if men could let it. Wicked men would let or hinder God in all his workes and the godly (through their miſtakes) would hinder him in ſome of his works; but none can; *He ſpeaks to the Sunne and it ſhineth not, yea he ſpeaks to the Sunne and it moveth not.* This is the greatneſſe and the muchneſſe of the power of God.

But, ſaith *Job*, *Will he plead againſt me with this great power?* All this power God hath (and this power he can put forth) but he will

will not put it forth againſt me (ſaith *Job* 1.) And what was *Job* that he ſhould be thus confident, and riſe up to ſuch a ſtrong aſſurance that God would not uſe his ſtrength againſt him? *Job* was a godly man, a man fearing God, a man perfect and upright, a man full of faith, even full of faith (though he lived in dark times, and under dark diſpenſations, yet I ſay, he was a man full of faith) in the Redeemer. Now it is no wonder if a man of this character, a man thus qualified and priviledged had this confidence, and was much aſſured that he ſhould proſper and ſpeed in it, *That God would not plead againſt him with his great power.*

Hence obſerve;

A godly man may be confident that God will deale gently and graciouſly with him. or,

That God will deal with him according to the greatnes of his mercy, not according to the greatnes of his power; The greatnes of the power of God is an exceeding great comfort to the ſincere, becauſe they know it is acted towards them in the greatneſſe of his mercy. It is comfortable to hear that the Lord, who (as the Prophet deſcribes him, *Nah.* 1. 3.) *is great in power, is alſo ſlow to anger* (the greatnes of mans power doth uſually quicken not clog his paſſions) but it is more comfortable to know, that God who is great in power, is quick and ſpeedy to ſhew mercy. And hence it is that a true beleever rejoyceth in the power of God as well as in his mercy, becauſe he knoweth that God hath declared himſelf powerfull for him, as well as mercifull. He knoweth God will not put forth power alone, or nothing but power towards him. God doth exerciſe all his refreſhing attributes, and divine perfections, in dealing with Saints. Whereas upon the wicked he exerciſeth his power chiefly, though not onely. *What if God to make his power knowne endured with much long ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 9. 22.) God pleads with the wicked according to the tenour of the Covenant of workes, but with Believers according to the Covenant of grace, in which he doth as it were uncloath himſelf of his power, and cloath himſelfe with love, mercy, goodneſſe, and tenderneſſe to his people. *The Lord* (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeakes, *Pſal.* 93. 1.) *is cloathed with ſtrength, wherewith he hath girded himſelfe*, he is cloathed alſo with mercy, and with that he hath girded himſelfe; he pleads with his people

people (I grant) in righteouſneſſe, as well as in mercy (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 3. 25, 26.) *God hath ſet forth Jeſus Chriſt, to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; to declare his righteouſneſſe, for the remiſſion* (or *paſſing over*) *of ſins that are paſt through the forbearance of God, to declare I ſay at this time his righteouſneſſe, and the juſtifier of him that beleeveth in Jeſus.* The juſtice or righteouſneſſe of God was never ſo fully declared as in Chriſt; for God did not ſpare him at all, but he having taken our debt upon him, diſcharged it to the utmoſt farthing. God pleaded againſt Chriſt with his great power, and with his perfect righteouſneſſe; To which plea Chriſt made anſwer with as Great a power (his being the power of God) and with as perfect a righteouſneſſe, his being alſo the righteouſneſſe of God. And hence it is, that when God comes to plead with Beleevers, he pleads not againſt them with his power and righteouſneſſe, ſeeing Chriſt with both pleads for them; He pleads for them not onely as he is Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, but as he is the mighty, the All-powerfull God. This is the chiefeſt ground of a beleevers confidence, that God (as *Job* here ſaith) will not plead againſt him with his great power. What then did *Job* beleeve would God doe with him? the next words enforme us what his faith was in that particular.

But he would put ſtrength in me.

(So we render) the Hebrew is only thus; *He will put in me*; what he would put is not expreſſed in the Originall which hath cauſed ſome variety of opinion what it ſhould be that the Lord would put into him; and I finde a threefold conjecture in the poynt. *Verumtamen ille ponet in me.* Heb.

Firſt, The ſupplement is made thus, *He would produce arguments or reaſons againſt me*: and this is conceived moſt ſuitable to the context, and ſcope of the place, as alſo to the action of pleading before ſpoken of; *would he plead with or againſt me with his great power, no, but he would ſhew me the reaſon of his dealings with me*; he would not proceed againſt me in a martiall but in a legall way, not in a prerogative but in a diſcourſive argumentive way: he would ſhew me the cauſe why he thus contendeth with me, and hath ſo ſorely afflicted me, God would condeſcend ſo farre to my weakneſs as to give me an account, though I dare not preſume to call him to an account; and though he hath both power and *Ponet de 'aſſertione in re juſtarationes.* Merc. *Ipſe ponet ſcilicet in me, id eſt non tecum agere mecum agere ſed verborum contentione.* Ch.

and right to deale with me as he pleaseth, yet I am much assured that he would be pleased to tell me why he deales thus with me. This interpretation is cleare to the generall scope of the context, and argues nothing unbecoming that holy confidence which the Grace of the Gospel, alloweth, a beleever in, yea encourageth him unto, when in any distresse he approacheth unto God for the reliefe and comfort of his troubled Spirit.

Secondly, Another thus; *Will he plead against me with his great power, no, but he would put his heart upon me*; that is, he would imbrace me with his favour and lay me in his bosome. Though his hand hath been exceeding heavy upon me, yet I believe his heart is towards me; though he hath smitten me with the wound of an enemy, yet he will receive me as a friend: and give me signall testimonies of his love. I should not feele the weight of his hand, but see the tenderneſſe of his bowels and his heart moving towards me. This also is an interpretation full of truth, and as full of comfort to a wearied soule.

Ponar in me, scil. cor suum, i. e. compellet cor suum me favere. Pisc.

Thirdly, The Supplement made in our translation reacheth both the former, and suites also to the former branch of the Text, with much elegancy; *Would he plead against me with his great power, no, but he would put power, or strength into me*, he will be so farre from putting out his strength against me, that he will put his strength into me, he knoweth my weakneſſe, how unable I am to contend with or beare up against his power, and therefore he would put power into me. Mr. *Broughton* renders clearely to this sense, *Would he by his great power plead against me, no, but he would help me*; help is power, and he that helpeth another, administers power to him; he either puts new strength into him, or joyns his strength with him. So then, *Job* was assured that God would put strength into him, or be his strength, to helpe and carry him through all the difficulties that lay before him.

Alij sub audiũt & repetũt ב *in me robur ponet ad ostendum coram se, me infirmum juvans & roborans. Merc.*

Hence Observe.

First, *A believer hath no opinion of his own strength, or that he can do any thing in his own strength.*

He trusts no more to his own strength or power, then to his owne righteousneſſe or worthineſſe. As our Justification before God is purely founded in the righteousneſſe of Christ, so all the actings of our sanctification are maintained by the strength of Christ. Holy *Job* spake nothing of his own strength, yea he spake as having no strength of his owne, A Godly man knows his own strength is but weakneſſe, and that when he prevailes with God it is with a power which he hath from God. *Paul* useth a form of speech which we may call *a divine riddle* (2 Cor. 12. 10.) *When I am weak then I am strong*, he predicates or affirmes one contrary of another, weakneſſe is contrary to strength, how a weak man should be strong, and then especially strong when he is weake, is hard to conceive by those who are spirituall, and is unconceivable by those who are carnal. This assertion is enough to pose and puzle nature; *He that is weak is strong*, or *the readiest way to get strength is to be weake*. The truth and the Apostle *Pauls* meaning is plainly this; *When I am weake in my owne sense and opinion, when I am convinced that I have no power of my owne, then I feele power coming in, then Christ strengthens me, and I am strong*, then I experience that word, *My grace is sufficient for thee*. When I finde the waters of my owne cisterne low and fayling, then I have a supply from the Spirit. So the Apostle spake, (*Phil.* 1. 19.) *I know that this also shall turn to my salvation through your prayers, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*. The first *Adam* received all his strength at once, we now receive our strength by dayly fresh supplyes from the second *Adam*. The word there used by the Apostle, which we render *supply*, signifieth an *unaer-supply*, implying thus much, that as the naturall body and each particular member of it, is supplyed with sence and motion, together with a suitable strength and ability from the head, so beleevers who are altogether the mysticall body of Christ, and each of them members in particular, are supplyed from Christ their head by the Spirit, with spirituall life, motion, and strength of Grace for every duty to which they are called, or which is required of them. And because as this is so in its selfe, so beleevers are instructed in it; therefore they disclaim and go out of their own strength, that *the power of Christ may rest upon them*. Christ fills none but the hungry, nor doth he strengthen any but the weake. *They who think they have any thing of their own, shall receive nothing from him; unlesse Christ be all in all to us, he will not be any thing at all to us.*

Secondly, Observe;

God himselfe puts strength into humbled sinners, that they may stand before him.

As he knowes what ſtrength ſuch need, ſo he gives them the ſtrength they need; *He will put ſtrength in me*, may be the confidence of any ſoule in *Jobs* caſe. We are not able to ſtand before God under the burden of our corruptions, nor yet are we able to walke before him under the burden of our duties, unleſſe himſelf be pleaſed to adminiſter ſtrength to us. And ſurely if we have cauſe even to glory in our infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon us (2 *Cor.* 12. 9.) then much more have we cauſe to glory in the power of Chriſt, when we finde ſo many infirmities reſting in us. The Prophet ſaw this fully while he ſaid (*Iſa.* 45. 24.) *Surely ſhall one ſay in the Lord have I righteouſneſſe and ſtrength, even to him ſhall men come, in the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified and ſhall glory.* That we have ſtrength in & from the Lord, is to us a ground of holy Glorying as well as that we have righteouſneſſe in him. For though to be juſtified be a higher favour then to be ſtrengthned, yet unleſſe we were ſtrengthned, as we could not take in the comfort of our Juſtification freely, ſo neither could we give God the glory of it ſo fully as we ought. And as it is the joy of beleevers that God will put ſtrength into them when they are humbled under the greateſt weakneſſes, ſo that their ſtrength is ſtill in him. For God doth not ſo put it into us, as to put that ſtrength out of himſelfe. The ſtrength which God puts into us is a ſtrength ſtill reſiding in himſelfe. The ſtrength which we have received, as well as that which we have not yet received, is ſtill in the hand of God. And from his hand we ſhall receive renewalls of ſtrength, for all our needs and purpoſes. Take five inſtances in ſpeciall.

Firſt, A Believer ſhall receive ſtrength to doe, or an acting power from Chriſt; Though Chriſt hath done all for us, yet we have much to doe for Chriſt, and (ſuch is the myſtery of Godlineſſe) that the ſame Chriſt who hath done all for us, will alſo do all in us. Chriſt layeth a yoake upon the necks of his people, and a burden upon their ſhoulders, but he puts power and ſtrength into their ſhoulders to carry his yoak and beare his burden; and that's the reaſon why he calls his *yeake eaſie and his burthen light*, it is not ſo conſidered in it ſelfe, as if we could make light worke of the work of Chriſt; but his burden is light, becauſe he hath promiſed to give his at leaſt a ſufficient ſtrength to bear it. A heavy burden is not grievous to equal ſtrength, & it is light to a ſuperior or

or greater ſtrength. As all our ſins (the leaſt whereof is a burden too heavy for us to beare) are light to us through the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, ſo all the commandements of God (the leaſt of weh is too hard for us alone) are light to us through the ſtrength of Chriſt. This was the Apoſtle *Pauls* profeſſion, *I can doe all things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheth me*, (Phil. 4. 13.) A little is too much for us, all is but little for Chriſt; as we have the anointing of the Spirit, whereby we know all things, (1 *John* 2. 20.) ſo we have the ſtrengthning of the Spirit, whereby we doe all things. It is a high priviledge, that Saints who receive their worke from heaven, receive their ſtrength from heaven too. And that as God puts his commands upon them, ſo he puts this power into them. The Lord is ſo farre from requiring worke of us without giving us wages for what we have done, that he doth not require worke of us without giving us ſtrength to doe it. When we looke upon our reward it might ſeeme that we have done all our ſelves, but when we looke upon his aſſiſtance, it is as evident that we have done nothing of our ſelves. The Lord is not like thoſe *Ægyptian* taſk-maſters who called for brick, but would not give ſtraw; no, the Lord who calls for brick, doth not onely give us ſtraw, but ſtrength, even hands, and hearts to doe our work. Goſpel-grace or new-Covenant grace, promiſeth us ſtrength to doe what we are commanded to doe.

Secondly, The Lord gives us, as ſtrength to doe, ſo to ſuffer, ſtrength to beare his croſſe as well as his yoake: ſo the Apoſtle comforts the *Corinthians* (1 Ep: 10.13.) *No temptation* (that is, no affliction, for as every temptation hath trouble in it, and is therefore juſtly called an affliction, ſo every affliction hath a tryall in it, and is therefore juſtly called a temptation, in which ſence the Apoſtle there ſaith, *no temptation*) *hath taken hold of you, but that which is common to man, but God is faithfull that will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but with the temptation will make a way of eſcape, that ye may be able to beare it.* As if he had ſaid; be not afraid that you ſhall be oppreſſed with the burden of any affliction or temptation which ye endure in my cauſe or for my name ſake; for ye ſhall receive an ability commenſarable to your affliction, whatſoever it is; you ſhall be ſupported in thoſe afflictions which are immediately from the hand of God, much more in thoſe which are from the hand of man, even in the extrea-

extreameſt and hotteſt perſecutions. *Paul* had experience of this (2 *Tim.* 4. 17.) There he tells a ſad ſtory of the fearefullneſſe if not of the unfaithfullneſſe of men, even of good men to him in an evill day, and he tells as comfortable a ſtory of the preſence & faithfullneſſe of God to him in an evill day, even in the worſt and blackeſt day that this world could lowre upon him in, *At my firſt anſwer no man ſtood with me* (that is, no man appeared to ſtrengthen, to comfort me) *all men forſooke me, I pray God it be not laid to their charge*, (What then? was he left of all, becauſe left of all men, no ſuch matter, All men left him, but God who is but one One-moſt God, and who alone is more then all men abode by him, as it follows in the Text) *notwithſtanding the Lord ſtood with me and ſtrengthned me, that by me the preaching might be fully knowne, and that all the Gentiles might heare: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lyon*; that is, out of the danger of my deadly perſecuters, even out of the danger of *Nero* himſelfe, by whoſe power ſo many had been deſtroyed. The Lord always ſtands by his in time of affliction and tryall either to ſtrengthen them in it, or to ſtrengthen them out of it, that is, to eſcape it; either to deliver them from the danger of it, or to encourage them in the dangers of it.

Thirdly, The Lord puts ſtrength into his people to mortifie corruption, he gives us not only power againſt, but power over our luſts. Fleſhly luſts and corruptions are ſtrong, and if we have not ſtrength from Chriſt to ſubdue and conquer them, they will be too hard for us, and foyle us. We are eaſily and preſently foiled, by pride, by covetouſneſſe, by wrath, by envie, all theſe paſſions and luſts will trample us under their feete in the dirt of all ſinfullneſſe and pollution both of fleſh and ſpirit, unleſſe we receive power from on high to ſubdue and mortifie them. (*Rom.* 8. 13.) *If ye through the Spirit mortifie the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live*; that is, ye ſhall live comfortably, holily, and eternally. *The deeds of the body*, that is, ſinfull deeds, and the root of them ſinfull luſts, count all weapons (as Leviathan doth ſpeares and ſwords) but *ſtraw and ſtubble*, rather to be laughed at then feared, except onely the weapons or power of the Spirit. And when once we take our luſts to taske with the weapons of the Spirit, they preſently fall and dye before us. *The Spirit is the ſtrength of God in us for the mortification of Corruption.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, We are ſtrengthned, or God puts ſtrength into us for the reſiſting and conquering of the temptations of Satan; we meet with many aſſaults from the devill, and from the world, who are confederate with our luſts. Theſe we muſt *reſiſt ſtedfaſt in the faith*; and that not only in *the faith* as *the faith* imports ſoundneſs of doctrine or divine truth, but as *The faith* imports dependance upon Chriſt for ſtrength and aſſiſtance. *Peter*, being *a chief a grandee* in the traine of Chriſt, or among the Diſciples of Chriſt, was Satans eye-ſore, and the fayrer marke for his fiery darts; Satans fingers icht to be doing with him, he (ſaith our Saviour) *deſired to have him that he might ſift him as wheat* (Luke 22. 31) that is, to ſift him throughly, not to fetch out his chaffe from him, but indeed to make him chaffe. How was *Peter* upheld? *I have prayed for thee* (ſaith Chriſt) *that thy faith faile not*; that is, I have prayed that God would put ſtrength into thee, that *thy faith faile not*; if once faith faile we are overcome. But is faith our ſtrength? No; but faith goes to and takes hold of him who is our ſtrength, or who puts ſtrength into us that we fall not in temptation. But you will ſay, *Peter* fell, and he fell grievouſly, his fall was great; he denyed his Maſter. 'Tis true, *Peter* fell, but he did not fall away, *his faith did not faile*, that is, it was not totally loſt, and therefore when Chriſt lookt upon him, and by that looke renewed his ſtrength, he gat up againe: even when he denied Chriſt there was a ſeed of faith remaining in him, though, like a tree in the winter, his fruit was gone, & ea and his leaves too, and he looked dead and withered, yet there was ſap in the root, his faith failed not; whence was this? he had an inviſible ſupply of ſtrength from God; *I have prayed* (ſaith Chriſt) *that thy faith faile not.* The prayer of Chriſt fayled not, and therefore his faith did not; Chriſt prayed that he might have ſtrength by beleeving, and though he had not ſo much faith as to preſerve him ſtanding, yet he had ſo much faith as to raiſe him from his fall. And what Chriſt prayed for *Peter*, he prayed for all that ſhould beleeve on his name that in all their reſiſtings of, & contendings with temptation, their faith alſo may not fail. As faith is one principal piece of our ſpirituall armour whereby we overcome temptation, ſo it fetches in that which is the whole of the whole Armour of God, even the ſtrength of God. When the Apoſtle exhorts Saints (*Eph.* 6. 11.) *To put on the whole armour of God*; He premiſes

another

another moſt needfull exhortation, or exhorts them firſt (*v.*10.) *to be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; implying, that it is not any one piece, no nor the whole armour of God abſtractly or preciſely taken, which is our ſtrength, but that the God of this Armour is our ſtrength in the ſpirituall combate. *Though our loynes were girt about with truth, and we have on the breaſtplate of righteouſneſſe, though our feete were ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel of peace, & we have the ſhield of faith in our hand; though we ſhould take the helmet of ſalvation, and the ſword of the Spirit which is the word of God*, yet, if thus arrayed, it were poſſible for us to neglect or forget the God of the Word, it were not poſſible for us to conquer, the *footmen*, leſſer, much leſſe the *horſemen*. Greater, leaſt of all, *The Chariots of iron*, the greateſt temptations of the Prince of darkneſſe. As no carnall weapon hath any thing at all to do, ſo no ſpirituall weapon can do any thing at all in this warre without the ſtrength of God; or rather (to conclude this poynt) all theſe ſpirituall weapons and Armour are nothing elſe but the ſtrength of God, or the various puttings forth of the ſtrength of God in weake man.

Fiftly and laſtly, God gives us ſtrength to pray to and plead our cauſe before him; he will not dazle us with his glory, nor confound us with his Majeſty when we come to plead with him, but he will put ſtrength into us. In prayer we prevaile with God, but the ſtrength whereby we prevail with God, comes from God; yea he doth not onely give us ſtrength in prayer to act by, but he acts that ſtrength in prayer. (*Rom.* 8. 26.) *Likewiſe the Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it ſelfe maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* Prayer is ſtrong worke, it calls forth the whole ſtrength of the ſoul, nor doth the ſoul in any thing ſhew its ſtrength more then in prayer; praying is wreſtling, and how can we wreſtle without ſtrength? Even the king of *Nineve* gave this direction at his faſt (*Jon.* 3. 8.) *Let them cry mightily. And our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the dayes of his fleſh offered up prayers and ſupplications with ſtrong crying and teares* (Heb. 5. 7.) Now the Spirit is the ſtrength of God in us, for prayer: he helpeth our infirmities, and we are onely a bundle of infirmities without his helpe. There is a threefold ſtrength needfull in prayer, and God by the Spirit puts theſe three ſtrengths into us.

First,

First, The Spirit helps us with ſtrength of argument to plead with God.

Secondly, The Spirit helps us with ſtrength of faith in taking hold upon God.

Thirdly, The Spirit helps us with ſtrength of patience in waiting upon God till we receive what we have prayed for. *Jacob* by this threefold *ſtrength had power with God in prayer* (Hoſ. 12. 3.) and it was the power or Spirit of God by which he had this threefold ſtrength to prevail with God. Thus *we are ſtrengthned with might by the Spirit in the inner man* (Eph. 3. 16.) We are ſtrong to doe, and ſtrong to ſuffer, we are ſtrong to mortifie corruptions, and ſtrong to conquer temptations, we are ſtrong to pray, and ſtrong to plead our cauſe at the throne of Grace, when God puts ſtrength into us. *Job* who had received great ſtrength from God in all the former caſes, was aſſured that he ſhould receive ſtrength alſo in the laſt, were he admitted to the ſeate of God. Would he (there) plead againſt me with his great power? No, but he would put ſtrength in me, to plead with him. And as he was thus aſſured that God would put ſtrength into him to plead his cauſe, ſo alſo liberty and freedome to doe it; as appears more fully in the next verſe.

Verſ. 7. *There the righteous might diſpute with him; ſo ſhould I be delivered for ever from my Judge.*

There; where? he means at the ſeat of God, as if he had ſaid; *Could I but once come to the throne or ſeat of God*, I ſhould have free leave and liberty enough to open and argue, to ſtate and debate my caſe, my long controverted and yet unreſolved caſe with him. He would not *plead againſt me with his great power* of Authority, but he would give me the power of liberty to diſpute, and reaſon out that matter with him. Severall paſſages in the former part of this Booke, clearly hold out this ſenſe. (*Chap.* 9. 34, 35.) *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his feare terrifie me, then would I ſpeak and not feare him, but it is not ſo with me*; as yet *God pleadeth againſt me with his great power*. Againe, (*Chap.* 13. 21, 22.) *Withdraw thy hand farre from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid* (as if he had ſaid *Plead not againſt me with thy great power*) *then call thou and I will anſwer, or let me*

ſpeake,

speak, and answer thou me. Those Texts already opened are of the same generall scope and tendency with this underhand; *There* (that is, All things being put into such a posture) *the righteous might dispute with him.*

Some read the text in the first person; *There, I, being righteous, might dispute with him.* Others, thus, *I should be found righteous if I did dispute with him*; As if he had said; *I make no doubt of proving my selfe righteous or innocent in this controversie with my friends; There I should not be found a false-hearted hypocrite, God who knowes both my thoughts and my wayes, would judge otherwise of me, then men have done.*

We reade the text indefinitely, not restraining it to his person, but as taking in any that are righteous; *The righteous*, that is, *any righteous man might dispute with him there*; his Court, his tribunal is free, and open for all that are upright or righteous. In what sense the word *righteous* is used in this Booke hath been opened more then once. In a word, the righteous man is not he that is legally righteous, but righteous in a redeemer, or righteous as opposed to an hypocrite. In both these senses, we may take the word here; *The righteous may dispute with him.*

הובח *est apud alium ita argumentari ut petas responsionem qua vicissim si quid erraveris redarguaris.* Merc.

The word is properly applyed to scholasticke exercises; where questions being put, arguments are brought by the opponent, which the respondent takes away, and the Moderator states between them both. This is the nature and manner of a strict dispute. But in a large or vulgar sence, every discoursing and reasoning about a doubtfull poynt is called disputing. *There the righteous may dispute with him.*

Hence note.

God is free, and ready to heare, the pleadings, and reasonings of those who are upright and righteous.

As the prayer of the upright is the delight of God, so their modest and humble disputings are not displeasing to him. A righteous man may plead with God freely, but he must not plead with God proudly, either crying up and boasting in his owne righteousnesse, or laying the least imputation of unrighteousnesse upon the wayes of God in dealing with him. The righteous dispute with God, yet they know and keep their distance, and while they do so, God is willing they should, and welcomes them when they doe

doe draw nigh to him, disputing as well as praying. In opposition to which 'tis said (*Psal.* 5. 5.) *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight, thou hatest all workers of iniquity. The foolish*, that is, the wicked man, the hypocrite with his false-hearted and flattering tongue, are an abomination to God. The foolish man that the Psalmist meanes, is not the man low in parts, but unsound in spirit. This foolish man shall not stand in the sight of God, nor will God heare him either disputing or praying, but reject him with his disputes and prayers. *Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity, and to the wicked God saith, what hast thou to doe to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my Covenant in thy mouth* (Psal. 50. 16.) God will not endure it, that wicked men should speak of him, much lesse will he endure, that a wicked man should dispute with him. God will have nothing to doe in way of arguing, and reasoning, either with a person or with a people, while he or they continue in their sinnes. (*Isa.* 1. 15, 16.) *When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; yea when ye make many prayers, I will not heare; your hands are full of blood*; that is, either of bloody sinnes in speciall, as murder and oppression, or of sinnes in generall; for every sin is blood and bloody, every sin may be called blood: and while the hands are full of blood in either sence, God will not heare, that is, he will not graciously heare or accept so much as one of many prayers. But are the wicked and their prayers and their disputings excluded for ever, while they continue such, or to do such things they are; and therefore in the next words, the Lord by his Prophet gives them this counsell; *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evill of your doings from before my eyes, cease to doe evill, learne to doe well, seeke judgement, releive the oppressed, judge the fatherlesse, plead for the widdow*; here's a description of a righteous person, righteous in his way, upright with God and men; and with such God will speake, such may dispute with him, as it follows (*v.* 18.) *Come now, and let us reason together. We know* (saith the blind man after he was healed) (*Joh* 9. 31.) *that God heareth not sinners* (that is, such as plead for or please themselves in any sin) *but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth*: him he heareth praying, and him he heareth disputing. Whereas of the prayings of the wicked he saith, *they are but meere bablings*, and of their disputings, *they are but vaine janglings. If* (saith *David*, Ps. 66. 18.)

18.) *I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me*, God will not regard his prayers, therefore not his disputes, who regards iniquity; but to the righteous and to such as repent of and turn from their unrighteousnesse, the Lord saith, *Come let us reason together*, let us dispute the poynt; *Though your sinnes be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* Where take notice, by the way, that while God saith, *your sins which were as scarlet shall be as white as snow*, we are not to thinke that sin shall ever change colour, or be other then it is in the eyes of God: so that *your sin shall be as snow*, is you sinners shall be so. It is a very hard thing, and next to an impossibility to change the nature of a sinner, yea or the custome of a sinner (*Jer.* 13. 23.) but it is altogether impossible to change the nature and constitution, yea or the complexion and colour of a sin, that lookes ever red, but the *reddest sinner* may turne *white as snow*. And when once the sinner is turned white, God is ready to hear both his prayers, and disputes. God loves to heare such penitents confessing their sinne, unburdening their conscience, pleading the promise. And he loves to hear the righteous holding out and maintaining the righteousnesse of their wayes (against all the clamours and calumnies of men) before him. *There the righteous may dispute with him.*

Secondly, Note;

The righteous are willing and have priviledge to dispute or argue their cause with God.

The righteous have accesse to God, and boldnesse with him in the blood of Christ; So that they dare not only, first, tell him of their own wants, or secondly, of their wrongs from others, or 3ly, of their integrity, and the uprightnesse of their hearts with him, and that he knows it is so, but fourthly (which argues the greatest height of holy boldnesse) they dare tell him of all the sins which they have committed against him, and dispute with him for mercy as their right upon the account of his own promise and covenant made with Christ in their behalfe, while respecting and reflecting upon themselves they can justifie God in condemning them for ever under wrath. Here is the right Gospel-Logicke; These are the holy subtleties which the Spirit teacheth; These are none of the *disputers of this world whose wisdome* (as the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 1.

1 *Cor.* 1. 20.) *God hath made foolish and will destroy*; but these are *Divine Disputants indeed*, or disputers for another world, whose wisdome is of God, and who are *wise unto salvation. These righteous ones may dispute with him.*

So should I be for ever delivered from my Judge.

Job proceeds from the thesis to the hypothesis, from the third person to the first; The righteous man pleads with him, but he doth not say, *so should the righteous be delivered for ever from his judge*; but *so shall I be delivered for ever from my judge*; thus he puts himselfe expressely into the number of the righteous or upright, and his argument stands thus;

He that is righteous, or upright, may dispute and be acquitted or delivered when he disputes with his Judge.

But I am righteous or upright.

Therefore I shall be delivered from my judge when I dispute with him.

The Major proposition is laid down in the former part of this verse; The Assumption in *v.* 11, 12. The conclusion appeares in the latter part of this 7th verse, and in the 10th.

So should I be delivered for ever from my Judge; That is, I should escape the severity of his sentence. The Judge hath him that comes before him in hold, he hath him in his hand or power when his case his pleading, but when a man is acquitted, then he is delivered from his Judge, that is, from the condemning sentence of his Judge, then he is pronounced free, or (as we say) acquitted by Proclamation; no man may then medle with him, or charge his crime upon him. *Job* was assured that he should come off well at his tryall, and that there could be no bringing of the matter about againe. *I should be delivered for ever*; that is I should never be questioned more, I should see an end, or final determination of my cause.

Liberarer evaderem semper a judice meo, i. e. absolverer, vitarem ejus condemnationem. Merc: *Probata causa impetrarem ab eo liberationem.* Jun.

The word which we translate *for ever*, signifies both *victory* and *eternity*; *I should be delivered victoriously and eternally, or unto victory or eternity from my Judge.* The same word signifies *victory* and *eternity* in the Originall, because eternity gets the victory over all. *Time is a great Conquerour*, that eats out all things here below, whose pedegree is from below; *but eternity will eate it out*, and conquer time it selfe; eternity is the greatest Conquerer.

Vindicabor ad victoriam vel eternitatem utrum enim לנצח *significat.*

Hoc supremo judice n decidentes, a vobis inquis judicibus vestrisq; suspi-

ciombus quo vis alio Aristarcho libe ubet vellor invalide r. Scalt.

rer. *For ever* is the saddest and sweetest word (upon different accounts) in the whole Bible; to be condemned had not so much sadnesse in it, were it not *for ever*, and to be justified, had not so much sweetnesse in it, were it not *for ever*. This word *for ever* weighs most both in reference to mercy and to judgement. *Job* said the utmost to his own comfort, when he said, *I shall be delivered*, or (as Mr. *Broughton* translates) *be quit for ever by my Judge.*

Judicem intelligit apud quem ipse jam cum adversus deum; facit enim deum velut litigatorem; quasi coram tertio quodam judice cum se disceptetur. Merc.

There is yet a question concerning the Judge, or who the Judge is from whom he should be delivered. Our reading seems to intend it of God himselfe. Others by the Judge understand his friends or others who charged him so hardly. There is yet a third opinion which supposeth the Judge to be some third person, who should umpire the businesse between God and him. I rather conceive that by his Judge he meanes God himself, to whose righteous and merciful tribunall he appealed from the hard sentence and judgement of his friends. And who having once declared his judgement not only the censures but even the suspitions of all men, whether of friends or enemies, would be silenced for ever. And so lastly, we may take the word *Judge*, which is here indefinitely proposed, universally. As if he had said; when once God hath had the hearing of my cause I shall not need to feare any, what they can say, or do against me, in the capacity of a Judge. *So should I be delivered for ever from my Judge.*

Hence observe;

God will for ever acquit the righteous, nor shall any have power to condemne those whom he hath once acquitted.

There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ (Rom 8.1.) as much as to say, such shall be for ever delivered from their judge *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God who justifieth* (Rom 8.33.) Though some will presume to lay many and grievous things to the charge of Gods Elect, yet God having Justified them, all their charges shall be reprobated and rejected. God who hath once Justified a person, will never lay any thing to his charge, & what charge soever others bring against him Gods justification will take it off. The Apostles challenge is universall, *Who shall lay any thing* &c? It is universall two wayes. First, in regard of persons accusing, he excepts none in earth, heaven, or hell. Secondly, in regard of crimes, he excepts no sort of sin, but

Hac ratione liber evadem ab impiis vitae judicibus & calumniatoribus, ut ita mihi disceptatione & contentione opus non erit.

let them seeke and finde what they can, be they sins against God or man, be they sins of omission or commission, be they sins never so much aggravated, or sadly circumstantiated, though against both light and love, yet they will not doe against a person Elect and Justified. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?* wipes away all charges. Accused they may be, though justified, but condemned they cannot be, because justified. The best of Saints on earth have much in them, and much is done by them, which might be matter of charge against them (for he that saith he hath no sin in him, hath indeed no truth in him, 1 *John* 1.8.) but Justifying Grace is their full discharge.

Againe, As the word *Judge*, is expounded universally, for all those that did or might accuse *Job*.

Observe;

The best and most righteous on earth, meet with many harsh accusers and hard Judges.

David had those who layd to his charge things that he knew not (*Psal* 35. 11.) The *Jewes* returned from *Babylon* to build their City and Temple, were charged with sedition; *Jeremie* was charged with treason; *Paul* was called, *a pestilent fellow*; and the primitive Christians were generally loaded with slanders by the Heathen. Misreport and reproach are the portion of Saints from the world. And how sadly *Job* was charged all along by his friends, and how severely censured, hath appeared every where in this Booke, especially in the former Chapter (*ver.* 5, 6, 7.) *Is not thy wickednesse great, and thine iniquities infinite? for thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their cloathing* &c. Had not *Job* reason to looke upon it as a great mercy to be delivered from such a Judge. And hath not every Godly man reason to make *Davids* choyce (2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) *Let me fall into the hand of the Lord* (*for his mercies are great*) *and let me not fall into the hand of man.* Now as men are for the most part over-severe executioners of Gods sentence, so they are usually over-severe Judges in giving their owne whether sence or sentence concerning others. And therefore *Jobs* faith did prophecy this good to himselfe, That God having heard him and judged him, he *should be delivered for ever from* (man) *his Judge.* And let this be the comfort of the righteous who are oppressed with

with the hard opinions of men, That, *God will at laſt deliver them for ever from every rigorous and unrighteous Judge.* In that Great day (as the Apoſtle *Jude* calls it) the cauſe of every righteous man ſhall be diſputed before God, and then they ſhall be delivered for ever from their Judge. And this did exceedingly bear up the ſpirit of the Apoſtle *Paul* in the midſt of the various cenſures and judgements of men concerning him; he knew their judgement ſhould be taken off at laſt, (1 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.) *With me it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould be judged of you, or of mans judgement, yea I judge not my owne ſelfe; But he that judgeth me is the Lord, therefore judge nothing before the time till the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſſe, and make manifeſt the counſells of the hearts, and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God*; That is, every righteous man, though diſpraiſed, and diſpiſed, though judged and condemned by men, though blackt over with falſe reports and reproaches, yet then every righteous man ſhall have praiſe from the moſt righteous God. He will then doe all his people right who have been wronged, and paſſe a juſt ſentence upon thoſe who have ſuffered much and long under unjuſt cenſures. *And ſo ſhall they be for ever delivered from their Judge.*

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 23. Verſ. 8, 9, 10.

Behold I goe forward but he is not there, and backward but I cannot perceive him.
On the left hand where he doth worke, but I cannot behold him, he hideth himſelfe on the right hand that I cannot ſee him.
But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as gold.

IN the two former verſes, *Job* expreſt much Confidence of a good iſſue in his Cauſe, could he but finde God and come to tryall. And he reneweth this again at the 10th verſe, Expreſſing the ſame Confidence; *When he hath tryed me I ſhall come forth as gold.* But though he was thus Confident of a faire coming off in Caſe he could finde God, yet he ſeems in theſe words to caſt off all Confidence of finding him; foraſmuch as yet he could not, or had not. Expreſſing himſelfe here as a man that had travelled into all parts and quarters of the world, Eaſt, Weſt, North, and South, to finde a friend, yet could not meet with him. *Behold I go forward but he is not there, and backward but I cannot perceive him. On the left hand where he doth worke, but I cannot behold him, he hideth himſelfe on the right hand that I cannot ſee him.*

There is a three-fold ſcope held forth about theſe words.

Firſt, As if *Job* did here deplore his fruitleſs paines, in wiſhing for his appearing before God, and in appealing to his Tribunall; for as yet he ſaw himſelfe unanſwered and fruſtrated in his expectation; God did not appeare to him in his troubles, nor declare his purpoſe towards him.

Secondly, His ſcope may be to aſſert the hiddenneſſe of the waves of God, or that the waves of God are not to be found out, nor underſtood by all the paines and induſtry, by all the endeavours and diſquiſitions of man; let him turn himſelf which way he will, *Eaſt or Weſt, North or South*, yet he muſt ſay, *I cannot behold him.*

Declarat Job ſe non poſſe ratione humana, per res naturales (quæs per quatuor mundi plagas ſignificat) cognoſcere certò & clare rationes divinorum judiciorum. Pined.

Thirdly, Some conceive that *Jobs* intent is to declare his own underſtanding or meaning in that earneſt wiſh which he lately made,

Hæc ita hactenus dicta sunt ad declarandum eos intelligentiæ, ne quis futurum esse existimasse, deum corporeum esse aut corporali loco circumscribi cum de illius præsentia agitur est. Id.

made, about his admittance to the throne of God, *O that I knew where I might finde him, that I might come even to his seat* (v. 3d) He was not so grosse as to thinke that God was Confined to any place, or that he had a Seat on which he sate, as the Princes of the Earth have; and therefore he affirmes, that God is *every where, and no where*; that he is every where indeed, though he could not finde him appearing to him any where; as if he had said, I doe not circumscribe God in my apprehensions to this or that place; I enquire after him *East, West, North and South*, that is, all the world over, yet I miss of him and have not attained my purpose to this houre; for he hath not yet manifested himselfe unto me. This seemes to be the generall scope of these three verses, which have two things especially Considerable in them.

First, *Jobs* solicitous Complaint of the Lords hiding himselfe from him after all his searchings.

Secondly, The Comfort which *Job* tooke in the Integrity of his own heart, and in the cleerenes of his Conscience, that if once he came to tryall, all would be well with him.

The 8. and 9. verses are all of one Importance, which I shall briefly open, and then give some notes from them.

Verf. 8. *Behold!*

He speaks here as of some strange thing, that God who is every where, should be no where found by him; *I goe forward, and backward, to the right hand, and to the left*, and finde him not.

Behold, I goe forward.

קדם *aliquando temporis aliquando vero loci principium & prioritatem significat.*

The word is applyed in Scripture to signifie both a priority in time, and a priority in place. Some Interpret it here of time, I looke to the times which were before, and now are past. In which sence the word is used (*2 Kings 19. 25.*) *Hast thou not heard long agoe?* That is, hast thou not heard of the times which are forward, or which have been before. So (*Pro. 8 23.*) Wisdome thus speakes, *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, ere ever the earth was.* So we translate it; the Hebrew is, *I was set up from everlasting, from the head of time, before the earth was.* Christ was before the head of time, or the beginning of time; we translate it here as referring to a place; *Behold, I goe forward*, that is, as some render, *I goe Eastward*, or *toward the East*. The world Consi-

Considered in it selfe hath neither forward nor backward, but man being considered as setting himselfe to the Sun-rising (for that's the natural posture of man) then *forward is Eastward*, the Sun riseth in the East. And then *backward* is Westward. The *left hand* is the North, and the *right hand* is the South; Such is the position of every man standing with his face to the East. Thus here, *Behold, I go forward*, that is, to the East, or I go Eastward; for a man may goe forward, in a large sence, though he go to the North, or to the South, towards East or West, which way soever he goes, he goes forward. But to goe forward, according to this strict notion is to goe Eastward, not onely because the *Jewes* and *Arabians* were wont to worship toward the East, but especially because man doth naturally turne himselfe toward the East, or the Sun rising. So the word is used (*Gen. 2. 8.*) *The Lord planted a garden Eastward in Eden*, or *forward in Eden. Behold I goe forward,*

In Scriptura partes hic, Orientalis, Occidentalis, Australis dextra & sinistra.

but he is not there.

And not he, saith the Originall, that is, he is not to be found, or he is not to be had; not that *Job* did think the Eastern part of the world empty of God, for he was acquainted with the doctrin of Gods Omnipresence, he knew that God is every where; but his meaning is onely this, he doth not manifest himselfe to me, nor appeare according to my appeale to him, that I might argue my case, and reason my matters with him. I obtain no discovery of God, but continue still in darknesse and dissatisfaction; *Behold I goe forward, but he is not there,*

Ante ibo, & non ipse. Heb.

And backward, but I cannot perceive him.

The same word in Scripture (as was noted of the word *Forward*) signifieth that which is behind both in time, and in place. It is applyed to that which is behinde in time (*Esa. 41. 23.*) where the Lord Challengeth the Idolls to give a proof of their Deitie, or that they were gods; *Shew the things that are to come hereafter*, or the things that are *backward*, and behind in time, things that are to be done or to come to passe hereafter, and we shall have some testimony of your God-head, or that ye are Gods. And as it signifies that which is behinde in time, so that which is behinde in place. Thus we render it, *I goe backward*, and then (according to the former notion, *forward* being *East-*

אחור *nunc ad tempus nunc ad locum refertur habet.*

ward) backward is Westward. The Westerne parts of the world are called the *back parts of the world*; not as some (grossely enough) give the reason, because the west parts of the world are the worst parts of the world, or were fit onely to be cast behind the back and be forgotten, as a more ignoble part of the world; but because according to the position of a man looking toward the Sun rising which is Eastward, the West is backward, or upon his backe.

And backward, but I cannot perceive, or (as the Original word strictly bears) *understand him*; That is, I cannot find any mark or print of Gods speciall presence with me there. God is as much hidden or secrets himselfe from me as much in the West, as in the East, both here and there my pursuits after him are fruitlesse. *I go backward, but I cannot perceive him*, nor doe I yet give over my enquiry; For as it followes;

Vers. 9. *I goe on the left hand where he doth worke, but I cannot behold him.*

Those words are a description of the *Northerne part* of the world, for that is on the *left hand*, (as was said) according to the most naturall position of mans body. And he addeth, *where he doth worke*; which addition gives a peculiar character or description of the place, and is variously translated.

Quando operatur. Pagn. In sinistram ejus sum. Vatab. Dum operatur. Vatab. Ubi quid operis fuum exhibet.

First, *On the left hand where he doth worke.* Secondly, *On the left hand, in his worke*, or *working*. (Thirdly, *On the left hand while he worketh*; we render, *On the left hand where he doth worke*, or *where he doth his worke.* Here a question is raised, why is this description given of the *left hand*, or of the Northerne part of the world? doth not God worke on the *right hand*, or in the South as well as on the *left hand*, or in the North.

I answer; Though God worketh all the world over, yet God worketh in some parts of the world in a more eminent manner. God worketh so in some places, as if he did work no where else; All places are the worke of God by Creation, and God worketh in all places by his providence. The works of creation would run to ruine, if God did not sustaine, and as it were keep them in reparation by the workes of providence, yet as God worketh in some men, and by some men, more then in, and by others, some persons

persons are to him as his right hand, he calls them forth to be greatly instrumentall to him. So he worketh in some places, and nations, and by some places and nations more then he doth in or by others. God is a free Agent, he worketh where he will, and he pitcheth upon some speciall places, and persons, (according to the pleasure of his own will) to worke in, and by, more then many others. And seeing according to this Interpretation, *The left hand where he is said to worke* so eminently, is the North.

We may observe;

First, *That God worketh more in the Northern parts of the world then he doth in the South.*

And the reason of this may be, because the Northern parts of the world are more inhabited and peopled then the Southern are. And which may be a second reason of it, The Inhabitants of the Northern parts of the world are more civilized and better instructed then the Southerne. Now the providences of God are most remarkable where there are most people, & they best taught and instructed, where the naturall faculties of man are most raised and sublimated by art and regular education, there or by them God doth his greatest workes; those places are (as it were) the stages whereon he acts and brings to issue the secret purposes and counsells of his heart, both in wayes of judgement and in wayes of mercy.

Besides, we finde that the Northerne Nations have in all ages been the most active and warlike.

The Fourth Monarchy, That of the *Romanes* whose seate was more Northerly then any of the former three, was the most active and warlike of the Foure, and extended its Dominion by extream and unwearyed industry further then any had done before. And those irruptions of enemies and Armyes which gave the greatest checke to the Romane Greatnesse & often plum'd or pull'd off the Feathers of that mighty Eagle, were still made by those people who lived and were bred up in climates more cold and Northerly then they; as all Historyes doe with one consent make good. Insomuch that it grew into a famous Proverb, *All evill comes from the North*, that is, *all troubles, invasions, and devastations are brought upon the Nations by some hardy people or other coming out of the North.* And the holy Scriptures of the Prophets are full of

Omne malum ab Aquilone.

this observation (*Jer.* 1. 14, 15.) *Then the Lord said unto me, out of the North an evill shall breake forth upon all the Inhabitants of the land. For lo I will call all the familyes of the Kingdome of the North, saith the Lord, and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem*, &c. By *The North* in this prophecy, he meanes *Chaldea* and *Babylon*, which are scituate North from *Jerusalem*. And by *all the familyes of the Kingdomes of the North*, he meanes all the Northerne parts under the obedience of the King of *Babylon*, who should readily follow and serve him in his warres against *Judea*. Again in the same Prophet (*Ch.* 4.6) *I will bring evill out of the North* (Ch. 6.1.) *Evill appeareth out of the North* (Ver. 22.) *A people comes from the North* (Chap. 10. 22.) *Behold a great commotion out of the North.* And when the Lord promised to remove far away from his people the *Northerne Army* (Joel 2.20.) he therein promised them the removall of all Armyes and troubles, because the North had most of all, if not alone troubled and harrazed them with Armyes. Againe, In the North the Gospel (which is the highest teaching and instruction) hath been more generally and more clearly published then in the Southern parts of the world, so that in allusion to that of the Prophet (*Isa.* 30. 26.) we may say, That the light of our *Northern Moon* hath been as the *light of the Southern Sun, and that the light of our Sun hath been seven fold to theirs, even as the light of seven dayes.* And according to the greatnes of Gospel light, the dispensations, and changes, which we have been under, have been very great; we especially in this Northern Nation, with those adjoyning to us and united with us under one Government, have had full Experience of, and may therefore (giving glory to God) seale to the truth of *Jobs* position; That God worketh on the left hand, or in the North. Have not we found God working in the North? What changes, what variety of action have our Northern parts both seen and felt? What wonders of mercy and salvation? what terrible things in righteousnes hath God wrought of late among us? The heavens and the earth, States of all sorts, The heavenly and the earthly, and of all degrees, the higher and the lower have been terribly shaken in these Nations. Providence hath wrought to amazement in our dayes. The Nations round about have heard the report of it, and wondered. Many have and will have cause to say of us, what hath God wrought! on the left hand,

hand, in our North, God hath been at worke indeed!

Moreover, we find that Mount *Sion* (which was not onely an eminent part of the literall *Jerusalem* but a figure also of the mysticall *Jerusalem*, or whole Church of God under the Gospel (*Heb.* 12. 22.) This Mount *Sion* (I say) is Geographically described in our Northerly scituation (*Ps.* 48. 2, 3.) *Beautifull for scituation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Sion; on the sides of the North, the City of the Great King. God is knowne in her pallaces for a refuge.* As if he had said, in *Sion*, on the sides of the North God worketh wonderfully, as it followes expressely (*v.* 4, 5.) *for lo the Kings were assembled, they passed by together, they saw it, and so they marvelled, they were troubled and hasted away*: that is, Kings conspiring against the Church were so terrified with the evidences of Gods power working mightily there, that they fled away, or as another Scripture phraseth it. *They came one way and returned seven.* And in this forme of speech is both the then *Jerusalem*, and the Church ever since expressed, in that boast which the King of *Babylon* (who was a type of all the enemies of the Church cloathed with mighty power and sovereignty) makes against her, (*Isa.* 14. 13.) *I will sit also* (that is, erect my throne) *upon the Mount of the Congregation on the sides of the North.* Mount *Sion* was called the Mount of the Congregation, because there the people of God the *Jewes* were famously known to congregate often together, and this (saith that proud boaster) on the sides of the North. And to compleat this notion of the workings of God in and from the North, *Christ himself is said to be raised out of the North*, For so some expound that Scripture (*Isa.* 41.25) *I have raised up one out of the North, and he shall come, from the rising of the Sun shall he call upon my name*, &c. This prophecy (I say) some expound of Christ, who shall gather his dispersed and despised ones from all quarters of the world. The greatest work of God that ever were done, Christ did them, and therefore the North, may justly be called the place where he worketh, seeing he raised Christ from thence.

Secondly, As the words are read thus: *On the left hand while he worketh*; as if *Job* had said, I look after God *on the left hand* or *in the North*, even in the time while he is working, or doing great things, and yet I cannot behold him.

Observe;

That

That God may be, and often is, working great things, and we not able to apprehend or behold him at his worke.

The invisible things of God, even his eternall power and Godhead are seene in the things that are made, and that not onely in the things that he made while he created the world, but also in the things which he makes while he governes the world, and yet himselfe is not seene in making them: and that not only because he is invisible in his nature, but because (which is the poynt in hand) the manner of his working is invisible. In some things God works so evidently, that the natural man cannot but say, *The finger of God is here.* But in other things he works so secretly, that the spirituall man is not able to see where the finger of God is, unlesse upon that generall acknowledgement that the finger of God is every where. *Solomon* (Pro. 30. 18.) saith, *There be three things which are too wonderfull for mee; yea, foure which I know not; the way of an Eagle in the ayre, the way of a Serpent upon a rocke, and the way of a Ship in the midst of the Sea*; even such are the motions of God, the wayes and workings of God among the sons of men; *A Ship in the Sea* leaves no track, no path; you cannot see where the Ship hath sailed; The ship plowes the Ocean, but the furrowes are unseene as soon as made. *A Serpent upon a rocke*, makes no dint, leaves no footsteps behinde him; the flying Eagle parts the aire, but there's no discerning where she hath past.

And thus *Job* seemes to speake here; *Though I goe to the North while God worketh*, yet I can see no more of him, then of the way of an Eagle in the aire, or of a Serpent upon a rock, or of a Ship in the Sea, *I cannot behold him while he worketh*, nor the way of his working. And further,

He hideth himselfe on the right hand that I cannot see him.

בשמאל *comparitive, in whose stead we should have* שמאל *signifies. Quasi dextra meridianæ plagæ velut operiens oculos circumvertat.* עטף *with some* על *desinit unde etiam*

The word which we render *hideth* signifieth, to wrap up with a covering; implying that God doth cover himselfe from the eye of man, in or with the *right hand* part of the world. Some render it thus; *He hideth his right hand*, or *his working hand, that I cannot see him.* We render it well, *he hideth himselfe on the right hand that I cannot see him. The right hand*, is put in opposition to *the left*, mentioned in the former part of the verse. There, in the South, God doth (as it were) purposely and artificially hide, and cast a vaile

vaile over himselfe (saith *Job*) lest I should see him there, he keeps himself yet more out of my view and reach then elsewhere. The word which we translate, the *right hand*, signifies *the Southerne parts of the world* (Cant. 4. 16.) *Awake O Northwinde, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden.* (Exod. 26. 18.) *On the South* (or *right*) *side Southward.* The word is also rendred, *the right side*, (2 Sam. 24. 5.) *On the right side of the City.* Further the word signifies, as the *right hand*, to also *strength*, because the right hand is strongest in most men and readiest for use. And so *he hides himselfe on the right hand* may import (as was touched before) that God hideth himselfe even there, where he puts forth his strength and power.

meridies dicitur מין *Thoman Nomini Jemin prospicio. Ita Thuan Exod. 26. 18. unde Thoman si appellavere formatur dextra a Austro: sive meridionale significat: sicut proprie est nomen regionis Australis.* Hieron.

From all these expositions laid together, in that *Job* here saith, he *went forward and backward*, or East and West, on *the right hand, and on the left*, or *North* and *South* (to mak I say) it appears that *Job* was a great traveller, that he travel'd all the world over; yet where was *Job* when he spake all this? Was he not upon his bed? was he not Gods Prisoner, shut up in his Chamber, when he said, *I goe forward and backward, Northward and Southward, and yet I finde him not, perceive him not, see him not.*

Hence learne;

First, *That God is every where.*

Job knew there was a presence of God forward and backward, Northward and Southward. He knew that God fills heaven and earth with his presence. There is a presence of God from which the worst of men cannot goe, and there is a presence of God into which, many times, the best of men cannot get; there was a presence of God out of which *Job* could not get, while (according to his desires) he could not get into the presence of God.

Secondly, From those various negatives here used, *I cannot perceive him, I cannot behold him, I cannot see him.*

Observe;

God is a Spirit, not visible at all in himself and he only appears, as and to whom himselfe pleaseth to appear to and among men.

The appearances of God are not naturall but voluntary, when his will is to be seene he gives man the priviledge to see him. It is altogether impossible to see him with a bodily eye, (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.)

God

God onely hath Immortality, dwelling in the light that no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, that is, with bodily eyes, and as it is impossible to see him at any time with an eye of sence, so he will not alwayes be seen by the eye of our understanding, no nor alwayes by the eye of faith. Faith shall hereafter be perfected in the vision of God, but here faith is sometime quite deprived of the vision of God, *He hideth himselfe from the house of Jacob*. Faith is opposed to all bodily sight (*2 Cor.* 5. 7.) *We walke by faith not by sight*; and faith hath not alwayes a spirituall sight. It is said (*Heb.* 11. 27.) that *Moses saw him that is invisible*, he saw him with a spirituall eye, the eye of faith; we have reason to beleeve, that *Job* at that time, saw God with an eye of faith, but he saw him not with an eye of understanding to discern the way of his working with him. They who are most spirituall and of the largest understanding in spiritualls, can no more comprehend God then a cockle-shel can containe the Ocean, and many who are spirituall are so dark in their understandings, or God is so darke to their understandings, that they cannot so much as apprehend or discerne him, see or perceive him.

Thirdly, When *Job* saith, *God hideth himselfe on the right hand, or in the South*, so that I cannot see him.

This teacheth us;

That God doth sometimes purposely withdraw and reserve himselfe from his most precious servants.

The Prophet hath a strange description of God (*Isa.* 45. 15.) *Verily thou art a God that hidest thy selfe* (as if he had said) it is thy use and custome to doe so) *O God of Israel the Saviour*; he was the God and Saviour of *Israel*, yet *Israel* could not see him, for he hid himselfe; When God will conceale himself, his *Israel* cannot see him. And hence we find in Scripture so many earnest Deprecations, that God would not hide himselfe, and so many vehement Expostulations when he did. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face* (saith the Church, Psal. 44. 24.) *and forgettest our affliction and oppression?* God hides himselfe five wayes, or in five things from his people.

First, He hides his favour and the light of his Countenance from his people. And (when this is hid God is hid) he will not let them see the love which he hath in his heart towards them, yea (possibly) he lets them see anger, wrath, displeasure; he puts on the habit of an enemy, and deales with them as with enemies. *Job* complaines more then once that God hid his favour from him, and shewed him nothing but his dread and terror.

Secondly, God hides his workes from his people, he will not let them be seen, nor be seen in them. *O how unsearchable are thy Judgements, and thy wayes past finding out!* God hath wayes and Judgements which man cannot reach unto. Some of his workes are acted (as we say) above board, they are done in a cleare light, he that runs may see and read them, and God in them; he that runs may read love written upon some of them in letters of Gold, or with beams of light. And he that runs may read wrath written upon others of them in letters of blood, or with streams of darkenesse, and the very shadows of death; but some works of God are so curtayned about and varied, so hidden and obscured, that we cannot perceive them. Though all the works of God are works of light, yet many of them are in the darke to man; *While judgement and righteousnesse are the habitation of Gods Throne, clouds and darknesse are round about him*, (Psal. 97. 2.)

Thirdly, God hideth the reason of his working. His works are often hid, but the reason of his working is oftner hid. *Jeremy* complaines, *Why doth the way of the wicked prosper?* He would know a reason of it; he saw that God let the wicked prosper, but the reason he saw not.

Fourthly, The design, or end of the worke of God is a hidden thing; as God doth not let men see the reason why he doth this or that, so not his aime, and end, what he would have, or what he drives at in doing it. When God afflicts a godly man, whether it be for the tryall of his graces, or to chasten him for his failings, or for the purging out of his corruptions, is often his doubt: and as 'tis thus in personall workings, so also in publique workings; *Whether God hath to doe with a Nation, or with a man onely, he hath his secrets.*

Fifthly, As God hides what himselfe doth, so he hides from us what he would have us doe, he hides his owne will from us in some things; we have indeed his Letters Patents, his proclaimed lawes before us in all things needfull to salvation; but there are some things which concern particular actings in our lives, wherein a godly man may be very ignorant of the will of God, & much

puzzled; in his Spirit what to doe, whether this or that be the course which God would have him take. God hides himself from us in the hidings of his will from us. For as when the Apostle saith (*Ephes.* 4. 20.) *Ye have not so learned Christ*, we are not to understand Christ personally, but Christ according to the Revelation of himselfe in the Gospel, Christ there is the will or mind of Christ; so when God hideth himself from or doth not discover himselfe to us, the meaning may be this; he doth not discover his minde and will to us, what he would have us doe, as to our particular case and condition. God keeps some long in suspence, long in the darke about this poynt; so that they often cry out with that good King in his dangerous strait, *We know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee.* (2 Chron. 20. 12.) Many a man is in as great a strait what to doe in regard of the darknesse of his condition, as *Jehosaphat* was, in regard of the dangerousnesse of it.

Fourthly, Note;

That, *A Gracious soule useth all meanes to attaine what he desires, especially to finde out the mind and will of God in his workings.*

What else is the meaning of all this? why else went *Job* forward and backward? why went he on the right hand, and on the left? why did he thus traverse his ground, and represent himselfe in these busie enquiries after God, travelling in the multitude of his thoughts upon his bed from sea to sea, & from the river to the ends of the earth, leaving no stone unturned (as we say) nor path untrodden, that he might get his cause determined, and his heart setled. *Obadiah* tells *Eliah* after he had met him (see how industrious the malice of *Ahab*, against that holy man, made him to finde him out whom his soule hated, 1 *Kings* 18. 10) *As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or Kingdom whether my Lord hath not sent to seek thee*, &c. Not that *Ahab* had sent Messengers into every quarter of the world, but the meaning is, that he had been very diligent and industrious to find out *Elijah*. And so saith *Job*, there is not any Corner under heaven, where I have not been seeking to finde him whom my soule loveth and longeth for. Thereby importing his exceeding diligence to finde God. They who have a desire after God indeed will take pains for him, they will seek him, East, West, North, and South, and never complain of the length of their journey. They will not stay till God comes home to their doors, but out they will go to seek him. For though it be a truth that no man can seek or looke after God, till God hath first looked after and found him, yet they whom God hath once found, have such an impression left upon their hearts, that when God seems to leave them, and to be as lost to them, they will more then seeme to look after and seeke him while he is absent from them; that is, while he hides himselfe from them. Surely God hath never toucht the hearts of those lazie professors that would faine be saved, but will goe neither forward nor backward, neither North nor South, after Jesus Christ; whereas if their desires were true and genuine, they would use all meanes, goe all due wayes, leave nothing unassayed that might probably bring them to the knowledge and enjoyment of him; O how busie was *Jobs* spirit to finde out God? And so busie should our spirits be to find him out, both for comfort and for counsell in all the turnings of our lives.

Lastly, Observe;

That after the use of much meanes to finde God, yet possibly God may not be found by us as to our apprehension.

Job spared no paines to finde out God, and yet he could not speed at that time, after all his search he found him not, he perceived him not, he did not behold him; you may pray, and seeke, and advise, and wait, follow this meanes and that meanes to find out God, or to recover the sence of his gracious presence with your soules, and yet (for a long time) misse of him. This is one of the exercises which God is pleased to put his people to, he therefore hides that we may seeke him; he doth not hide himself because he will not be found, but he hides himselfe because he will be sought; and yet when he is sought, and sought in a right way too, he will not presently be found. For though none that seek him in sincerity, but shall finde him at last (*He hath not said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vaine*; that is, seeke me and never finde me, the Scripture speakes no such thing) nor did *Job* always seek and not finde; yet, as he in his time, so we in ours may seek him long and not finde him, and yet still we must continue seeking, because God hides himselfe that we may seeke him more, not that he would have us give over seeking. And therefore in times of desertion, in hiding, and withdrawing times, doe not

not give over ſeeking; for the reaſon why God doth withdraw, is, that we may ſeek him more, *and follow harder after him*; that we may ſeek him (as *Job* did) *Eaſt*, *Weſt*, *North*, and *South*; that is, in all meanes, duties, ordinances, he will not alwayes hide himſelfe; that's the ſumme and ſcope of the 8. and 9. verſes.

Verſ. 10. *But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me I ſhall come forth as gold.*

Connecto hunc verſum cum 70. obtinerem a judice nam is novit. Eſt igitur ætiologia ſ eis cætera autem quaſi per parentheſin interſeruntur illo loco. Coc:

Job could not finde the wayes of God, well (ſaith he) though I cannot find out Gods wayes, yet God hath found out my wayes; though he is pleaſed to vaile his owne wayes, yet mine are open, He hideth himſelfe from me, but I am not hid from him. *He knoweth the way that I take.*

Further, In this verſe *Job* ſeems to give a reaſon of his hope to ſpeed well at the ſeate or throne of God whether he had appealed (v. 3.7.) As if he had ſaid, *Seeing my heart tells me, my way is good, and my Judge knows it to be ſo, how can it be but that my judgement from him ſhould be Good? He knoweth the way that I take.*

Quamvis illum non poſſit homo perſpicere, at ille perſpectas habet omnium mortalium actiones.

To know, may be taken here two wayes; firſt, as an act of the Underſtanding onely, *he knoweth*, that is, he fully perceiveth and apprehendeth what my way is.

Secondly, As it takes in an act of the affection too, *He knoweth*, that is, he approveth *the way that I take*; my way is pleaſing to him. When God is ſaid to *know the way of the righteous* (Pſ. 1. 6.) the meaning of it is, he is well pleaſed with their way, and will proſper them in it, they ſhall have good ſucceſſe in what they go about.

Againe, whereas we tranſlate, *He knows the way that I take*, that is, my courſe of life, or converſation among men. The Hebrew is, *He knoweth the way that is in me*, he doth not onely know my outward way, or the way that is without me, but he knowes my inward way, the way that is within me. We have a way within us, and that is the way of our thoughts, and we have a way without us, and that is the way of our workes. *He* (ſaith *Job*) *knows the way that is in me*, therefore much more the way without me, he knows me through and through; As if he had ſaid, what though I cannot finde him, yet I will leave my cauſe with him; for he needs no information of mine, to lead him into the

the underſtanding of it; He himſelf knows all things by himſelf; *He knoweth the way that I take, or that is in me.*

There are three things which *Job* might aim at in this ſentence.

Firſt, an account why he was ſure of a right judgement from God, becauſe he was not onely a Judge, but an eye-witneſſe of all the wayes that he had ever gone.

Secondly, A confutation of his friends opinion of him, as if he were a man that did not fear God; whereas he did acknowledge that both himſelfe and all his wayes were viſible and manifeſt unto God.

Thirdly, A ſtrong aſſertion of his owne innocency, ſeeing he could ſpeake thus rejoycingly, that *God knew all his wayes.*

Hence obſerve;

Firſt, *The way of man, even his moſt ſecret way, or the way within him is knowne to God.*

God wraps up himſelfe often in the darkneſſe of ſecrecy as to man, but man is never in that darkneſs as to God; the very children of darknes, and the wayes of darknes are in the light to him. And as the wayes of evill men, and the evill of their wayes, ſo the wayes of good men, and the goodnes of their wayes, are knowne to God. We need not feare that the good we doe or have done (though no eye of man ſee it) ſhall be loſt in the dark. We ſcarce know our owne wayes, and we cannot know our owne hearts, but God doth. (*Jerem.* 17. 9.) *The heart of man is deceitfull above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* No man can know all the wayes of his heart; he cannot come to the bottome of his own heart, though he may know the bent of it; but (ſaith God) *I ſearch the heart, much of our heart is a ſecret to our ſelves, but to God nothing of it is*; he knowes our inſide fully. As he knowes our actions, ſo the grounds upon which we act, and the ends for which we act, and the heart with which we act; thus God knowes the way that every man takes. And thus none but God can know the wayes of man. We can trade no farther then upon the borders of mens wayes, their outward acts, as for the ſpirit and principle of them, whence they flow, as for the aymes and ends of them, whether they are flowing, with theſe God alone is intimate. And with theſe God is more intimate then man can be with that which is wholly outward.

And

And ſeeing God knows all the wayes which man takes; let no man goe about to hide his wayes from God; 'Tis vaine to hide any thing from him, who ſees all that is hidden. He that comes before a Judge that knowes what he hath done, and is able to prove it, why ſhould he deny it? The heart of a naturall man is not more buſied about any thing then in making veils for his ſin; the firſt thing that man did after he had ſin'd was, to make ſuch a veile. As all men have ſinned after the ſimilitude of *Adams* tranſgreſſion, ſo they cover their tranſgreſſions according to the ſimilitude of his covering. The Holy Ghoſt (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) calleth them *bleſſed whoſe ſins are covered*, but it is with a covering of Gods providing, not of their owne; woe to thoſe whoſe ſinnes are hid by a covering of their own providing; God hath given us his Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his righteouſneſſe, for our covering; while our ſins are ſo covered bleſſed are we, but if we cover them with a covering of our owne, God will lay them open for ever to our ſhame *Woe to the rebellious children, ſaith the Lord*, (Iſa. 30. 1.) *that take counſell but not of me, and that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may adde ſin unto ſin*: if we cover our ſins with any thing but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, we cover them with a ſin, not only becauſe all our righteouſneſs (which is the beſt thing of our owne that we have to cover them with) is ſinfull, but becauſe the very act of covering them ſo is a ſin; and therefore in ſo doing, what doe we but *adde ſin unto ſin*; And if to cover our ſins with our owne righteouſneſſe be a ſin, how doe we heape ſin upon ſin while we cover it (as many endeavour to doe) with our denyalls, diſſemblings and excuſes?

Secondly, Conſider with what Confidence *Job* ſpeakes; he had diſcourſed of his fruitles labour and travell in the uſe of all meanes to finde God; well (ſaith he) yet it is a Comfort that God knowes my wayes, though I cannot finde out his.

Hence Note.

It is the Joy of the upright that God knows them and their wayes, yea the wayes that are in them.

Thus *Jeremy* (Chap. 12. 3.) having complained of the proſperity of evill men before the Lord, concludes. *But thou O Lord knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen mee and tryed my heart toward thee*; this was the Prophets joy, and ſo it was the Apoſtles, when he ſaid;

ſaid; *But we are made manifeſt unto God* (2 Cor. 5. 11) That's the thing that pleaſeth us, *David* (1 Chron. 29. 17.) ſpeakes in the ſame frame of ſpirituall contentment; *I know alſo ô my God that thou tryeſt my heart, and haſt pleaſure in uprightnes*; This was a pleaſure to *David*, this was his Joy and crowne of Rejoycing, that God knew him; and a godly man hath much Cauſe of rejoycing in this, that God knowes him perfectly, conſidering how much he is miſtaken and miſunderſtood by men. When our wayes are miſtaken by men, 'tis great content to remember, that God knowes the way that we take without the leaſt miſtake. For this aſſures a godly man of three things.

Firſt, That God will reckon his wayes ſuch as they are, and him ſuch a one as he is. He is much aſſured that God will never put a falſe gloſſe, or an unjuſt conſtruction (which men are apt to doe) upon the text of his life.

Secondly, This aſſures him that his works of righteouſneſſe ſhall not want a reward, for *God is not unrighteous to forget our worke and labour of love* (Heb. 6. 10.) that is, he will not let us goe without a reward for ſuch workes; for as then we are ſaid not to forget the word of God when we obey it; ſo God is ſaid not to forget our works when he doth reward them.

Thirdly, This aſſures him that God will give teſtimony to his integrity, and beare his witnes (when moſt ſeaſonable) to his righteous works. Though men will not give him Teſtimony, yet God who knowes his wayes will; God will not doe leſſe for a good man then a good Conſcience will. For as an evill Conſcience will accuſe, ſo a good Conſcience will excuſe (*Rom.* 2. 15.) *Their Conſciences in the meane time accuſing or excuſing one another.* Conſcience knowes our wayes, and therefore Conſcience gives Teſtimony againſt them that doe evill, and Conſcience will give Teſtimony with thoſe that doe well; let all the world clamour againſt them, Conſcience will not, becauſe Conſcience knows the way that a man takes. Much more then will God Teſtifie for that man whoſe way is good; and how ſweet is this! 'Tis ſweet and ſatisfying to a gracious ſoule to doe good, but when God himſelf ſhall teſtifie for a gracious ſoule, that he hath done good, this is much more ſweet and ſatisfying. (1 *John* 3. 20, 21.) *If our heart (or Conſcience) condemne us, he is greater then our heart (or Conſcience) and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemne us*

not,

not, then have we confidence toward God: even this confidence, that God will not only not condemn us, but acquit us, yea and teſtifie for us; And as it is worſe to be condemned by God then by Conſcience, ſo it is better and ſweeter to be acquitted by God then by our owne Conſcience, when once our Conſciences are acquainted with his acquittall of us and teſtimony for us. Yea, there is this further Comfort in it, that for as much as our wayes are knowne to God, he will give teſtimony of them to others, as well as to our owne Conſciences. The world ſhall know what our wayes are one time or other, as well as God knowes them now: they who are moſt prejudiced againſt them, and draw the blackeſt lines over them, ſhall one day be made to know, that they did not know the beauty of them. And this God will doe either

Firſt, In this world by ſome extraordinary providences; as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 37. 6.) *He ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſſe as the light, and thy judgement as the noon day.* A mans righteouſneſſe may lye in obſcurity, or in the darke, no man knowing it, and moſt men judging him unrighteous, and wicked, but Providence ſome time or other will bring forth this mans righteouſnes as the light, and his juſt dealing as the noon day.

Or, 2ly, If a good mans wayes lye hid from the world all the dayes of his life in this world, yet the Apoſtle aſſures him, that in the *great day* God will proclaime them in the eares of all the world. (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darknes, and will make manifeſt the Counſels of the heart.* So then a day is coming which will make *thorough lights* in the world, and bring to light the moſt hidden things of the darkeſt darkneſs. And by *theſe hidden things of darknes, and Counſells of the heart*, we are to underſtand not onely evill things, and wicked counſels (ſure enough God will bring them to light) but even thoſe righteous things, and good Councels of the heart, which have layne in the darke, or unrevealed: God will bring to light all the hidden things of darkneſs, the good as well as the bad, and then ſhall every man, that is, every good man, every godly man, have praiſe of God. The praiſe of man is very pleaſing unto man, but O how unſpeakeably pleaſing is the praiſe of God! And this opens a vaſt difference, between the hypocrite and the ſincere; Can a hypocrite rejoyce in ſecret, ſaying thus; God knoweth the way that I take? He

He cannot ſay thus; and I may ſay three things of the hypocrite in oppoſition to this.

Firſt, The hypocrite endeavours to hide and put his wayes out of the ſight of God, as much as he can; As he hath not the light of Gods countenance, or of his favour ſhining upon him, ſo he deſires not to have the light of his knowledge ſhining into him. (*Iſa.* 29. 15.) the Prophet deſcribes ſome *ſeeking deepe to hide their Councels from the Lord, and their workes are in the darke* (both in naturall and morall darknes) *and they ſay, who ſeeth us, and who knoweth us?* The endeavour of the hypocrite is that he may be hid. And

Secondly, *He cryes all's hid*; as it is his endeavour, that God ſhould not, ſo it is his hope that God doth not know his wayes, much leſſe his heart; He is often ſure that men do neither ſee nor know, & he always preſumes that God doth not; and therefore as one out of doubt he puts his doubts, *who ſeeth? and who knoweth?* Though flaſhes of feare come in upon him, ſometimes, yet he flatters himſelfe with preſumptious hopes and falſe perſwaſions, that God knowes him not, ſees him not, and that his darke way ſhall never be diſcovered; and as in that place of the Prophet, they ſpeake indefinitly, thereby inferring that God doth not ſee them; ſo we have them in the Pſalme ſpeaking directly that God ſhall not. (*Pſal.* 94. 5, 6, 7.) *They breake in pieces thy people O Lord, and ſlay the widdow and ſtranger, and murther the fatherles; yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard it.* As if they had ſaid, though God ſhould ſet himſelfe to ſearch us out, and would never ſo faine ſee what we are doing, yet he ſhall not. We will carry it ſo cloſely and cunningly, that the eye of God ſhall not reach us. Their workes were ſo foule and bloody, that the Sun might be aſhamed to looke upon them, and they were ſo cloſe that they beleeved God could not look upon them, or bring them to ſhame for them.

Thirdly, 'Tis a terror to an hypocrite to remember, that God knoweth his wayes. That which *Job* ſaith of the wicked in generall, is moſt proper to hypocrites (*Chap.* 24. 17.) *The morning is to them even as the ſhadow of death; if one know them, they are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.* The Hebrew is very conciſe, *if know*; we make up the ſence thus, *if one know them*, that is, if God or man know them and their wayes, if they be apprehended

and discovered any way, in their abominable wayes, *they are in the terrours of the shadow of death*; that is, they are ready to dye with the fright and terror of it. Hypocrites are so farre from rejoycing in this, that God knowes the way which they take, that to be known either of God or man is their torment.

Thirdly, Consider why doth *Job* appeal to God in this Cause depending between him and his friends? The reason was, because he knew his friends mis-judged him through their ignorance; Therefore he desired to be heard by a Judge, that perfectly knew his wayes, and so was able to make a righteous judgement of him.

Hence Observe;

God is every way fitted to be a righteous Judge.

There are two things especially that fit a man, to be a Judge.

First, That he hath a principle of righteousnesse in him, that he be not byassed and turned aside from doing right indifferently without respect of persons.

Secondly, That he hath a principle of light in him, that he be (as *Jethro* adviseth *Moses*) a man of knowledge. Both these meet perfectly in God; He is just and righteous in all his wayes, and he knowes all our wayes. Some earthly Judges erre for want of a Principle of righteousnesse; and so in things which they plainly know and see as cleare as the light, are ready to be drawne and wrought off by respects and interests. Againe, there are other Earthly Judges, who are right and honest enough in their Principles, nothing can take them off, or mislead them to the right hand or to the left, but they want knowledge and understanding to discerne between good & evill, right & wrong, they cannot see into the merit of the Cause, or the integrity of the person before thē, and thereupon stumble in Judgement. Indeed the best of Earthly Judges cannot alwayes (when they have done their best) finde out who hath the good Cause, and who hath the bad; and many times they that plead blinde them with their Rhetorick, setting a faire glosse upon a foule Cause, or making a faire Cause looke foule, and so the Judge is deluded; seeing he judgeth of things as witnessed and represented, as alledged and legally proved, and so it may fall out that while he judgeth righteously, his judgement may not be right. But we (as *Job* here) have cause to rejoyce that

that we have to doe with a Judge, who as he is both righteous and knowing, so he knowes all things and persons in themselves, and not from others. *He needs not that any should testifie of man, for he knoweth what is in man* (Joh. 2. 25.) *He knows the way that is in me*, or *the way that I take*: and as it followes;

When he hath tryed me I shall come forth as gold.

Mr. *Broughton* reads thus, *Tryed he me I should come forth Gold*, that is, if God (as I desire) would vouchsafe to try me, I should appeare what I am indeed, not what I now appeare.

When he hath tryed me.

There are divers wayes of tryall, three especially; God tryes, first, by prosperity, that's a tryall, a full estate discovers a man, as well as a low and empty estate doth. To know how to abound is as high a point of grace as how to want (*Phil.* 4. 12.) to have power in our hands, discovers us as wel as to be oppreſt by power. *Magistracy shewes the man, and it shewes many to be but men.* *Magistratus indicat virum.* Great power over men is a great temptation to man, and so likewise is the praise of men. (2 *Cor.* 6. 4.) *But in all things approving our selves as the Ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses*, &c. and by what else? *by the Armour of righteousnesse on the right hand, and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evill report and good report.* We approve our selves, and tryall is taken of us as well by things on the right hand, as by those upon the left, as well by honour, as by dishonour. The good report or praise which a man meets with in the world is as great a tryal as the ill report or dispraise which he meets with in the world; 'tis a great tryal to be dispraised, to have dirt thrown in our faces, & it is a great tryal to be prais'd, to be commended, & applauded, to be lifted up in the thoughts & upon the tongues of men. *Solomon* hath an excellent passage (*Prov.* 27. 21.) *As the fineing pot for silver, and the furnace for gold, so is a man to his praise*: that is, a man is tryed by his praise, as the silver is tryed in the fineing pot, and as the gold is tryed in the furnace. Whenever you are praised, you are tryed; Then your humility and selfe-denyall are tryed; Then you are tryed whether when you are praised by men, you can give the whole glory to God. *Herods* praise was the fineing pot, and the furnace whereiu he was tryed,

it made him to appeare to be but drosse indeed. His heares *Cryed the voyce of God and not of man*, When you cry up such a Preacher, such a Magistrate, such a Souldier, such an Oratour, you put him into the fineing pot, & he that is but drosse consumes. *The worms eate up Herod, because he gave not Glory to God* (Act. 12. 23) As it was a most dreadfull, so it was a most righteous judgement, that he should be eaten up of *wormes*, who forgot that he was *one*, and forgot it so farre that he was pleased with their applauses, who cryed him up for a God. Worldly prosperity, power and praise are the *right hand*, *way*, by which God tryeth the sonnes of men.

Secondly, God doth usually try by affliction, and that's the *left hand way*. (*James* 1. 12.) *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation* (meaning affliction) *for when he is tryed he shall receive the crowne of life*, &c. That is, when those temptations and afflictions have tryed him, and he hath approved himselfe in the tryall; then, *he shall receive the crowne of life*, &c. (1 *Pet.* 1. 6.) *Though now for a season* (if need be) *yee are in heavines through manifold temptations, that the tryall of your faith being much more precious then of gold that perisheth, though it be tryed with fire, might be found to praise*, &c. Affliction is the tryall of our faith in God, and of our patience under the hand of God. *When nature is vexed it shews it self, and so doth grace. Affliction discovereth both what our vertues and what our corruptions are.*

Cur autem Deo bat reddam ten tamina? eorum. Natura enim probat fidelem.

Thirdly, God tryeth man by a kinde of examination, *David* speakes of that (*Psal.* 17. 3.) *Thou hast proved mine heart, thou hast visited me in the night, thou hast tryed me and shalt finde nothing.* In the night the soul is free from businesse with the world, and therefore freest for businesses with God & then did God prove and visit *David*, that is, examine and sift him, by calling to his minde all his wayes and workes in former passages; And the issue of this tryall was, *he found nothing*, not that his soul was empty of good things, or that there was nothing evill in him, but God upon examination found nothing of that evill in him, which some men suspected him of, Namely, either any ill will or evill designe against *Saul*, in reference to whom he called his cause a righteous cause, *or the right* (ver. 1.) *Heare the right, O Lord*, &c. Thus God tryed *David*; And thus earthly Judges try men, They examine them, and their case, that's cal'd a tryall; in this third sence we

we are chiefly to understand the meaning of *Job* in this place. *Job* had long before undergone a tryall by prosperity and praise, *Job* was at that time under tryall by affliction, he had past the former and was under the latter, yea, he was deep in it, but as yet he had not come to this tryall of Examination, or to a judiciary tryall, which he earnestly begg'd of God. All men shall come to such a tryall in *the Great day. We must all appeare before the Judgement seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad* (2 Cor. 5. 10) Some expound *Job* appealing here to that Judgment. But I conceive that the whole tendency of his discourse aimes at an earlyer Judgement or day of tryall then that. And though (possibly) his expectation was not great, if any at all, that God would grant him a private Session (as we may call it) for his personall tryall, yet (to shew that he had not the least suspition of being acquitted in that day whensoever it should be) he importunately professeth he could wish it might be the next day, and that he would refuse no paines nor travell, for the procuring of such a day, were it to be obtained; being fully satisfied from the light and dictates of his own Conscience, that when the Lord had so tryed him, he (as *David* spake in the place lately opened) *should finde nothing*, no such fault or guilt as was charged upon him, Christ writing to the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus* gives him this among other commendations (*Rev* 2. 2.) *Thou hast tryed them which say they are Apostles and are not, and hast found them lyars.* Many appeare faire in holines, and boast highly of their priviledges, (even as high as an infallible Spirit and immediate mission) who yet being tryed and throughly examined by the Church, or by those who are spirituall, and have sences exercised to discerne both good and evill, will be found *lyars*, counterfeit stuffe, and lighter then vanity. But *Job* was perswaded that though God should try him, not onely should nothing be found against him, nor he found a lyar, but that much would be found for him, and himselfe be found in the truth, as he plainely expresseth in the close of the verse; *when he hath tryed me*, what then?

Intelligitur de illis diei examine in quo Deus discussurus est Job procedentes.

I shall come forth as gold.

Egrediar ex hoc igne probationis meæ expurgatissimus Conscientiæ meæ innocentia.

Here's the issue of the tryal. There are seaven words used in the Original for gold; That in the text notes the colour or yellownes of it, Pined.

Aurum generale vocabulum eſt a colore fulvo ſeu flavo, & transfertur ad alia rerum mundarum ſignificandum, ſic ab aura & aurora aurum derivat. Iſidor: Plenus vino aureo, i. e. ſplendido velut aurum.

of it, and is applyed to ſignifie any thing that is bright, or ſhineing, pure and ſplendid, as Gold is (*Zach.* 4. 12.) we read of *golden pipes which did empty the golden oyl* (or according to the letter of the Hebrew, *the gold*) *out of themſelves*. That ſpirituall oyle was called *golden* or *gold*, becauſe, like gold, ſhining, pure and precious. The gifts and graces of the Spirit are *golden oyle* indeed. So (*Jer.* 51. 7.) *Babylon hath been a golden Cup in the hand of the Lord*; Which ſome expound tropically; taking the Continent for the thing contained; The cup for the wine, *Called golden wine*, becauſe of the ſplendidnes and beauty of it (as *Solomon* ſpeakes, *Pro.* 23. 31.) *When it giveth his colour in the cup.* Or *Babylon* is called a *Golden Cup*; firſt, becauſe of the great glory, wealth, and illuſtrious pomp of that Empire, deſcribed in *Daniel* (Chap 2. 32. 38.) by *a head of Gold*, and marked out in *Iſaiah*, by the name of the *Golden City* (Iſa. 14. 4.) and ſecondly, becauſe God had cauſed other Nations to drinke deepe of his wrath by the power of the Babylonian Empire. Upon which account Myſticall *Babylon* is ſaid to have a golden cup in her hand (*Rev.* 17. 4.) *Gold*, is the King, the chiefe of metals; gold is among metals as the Sunne is among the Starres and Planets of Heaven, the glory and Prince of them all. So that when *Job* ſaith, *I ſhall come forth as gold*, his meaning is, I ſhall come forth pure and in much perfection. Gold is firſt the moſt precious metall; ſecondly, the moſt honourable metal; thirdly, the moſt weighty metal; fourthly, the moſt durable metal; fifthly, the moſt deſireable metal: Every one is for gold; So that when *Job* ſaith, *I ſhall come forth gold*, his meaning is, as if he had ſaid, my tryall will not diminiſh, but rather adde unto me; I ſhall be precious, honourable, weighty, durable, deſireable after I have been in the furnace or fining pot of my ſ reſt and ſevereſt Tryalls. And he ſpeakes thus in oppoſition to his friends, who had an opinion of him as if he were but droſſe or the *off-ſcouring of all things* (as the Apoſtles were reckoned in their time) *I ſhall come forth not droſſe ana traſh, but gold*, as if he had ſaid, *Were I once tryed, I ſhould be for ever quit of thoſe Charges brought in againſt me, and of thoſe ſcandals caſt upon me, I ſhould ſhine in reputation and honour like pure gold coming out of the fire. I ſhould recover my good name, and be found a man loyall to God and righteous towards men.*

Aurum per ignem probatum ſimbolum eſt juſtorum nam illos minime lædit examen ignis, per iſta igitur verba viri ſanctus candorem ſuæ innocentiæ & conſcientiæ puritatem maximam circumloquitur Bull.

Hence note.

Grace

Grace renders man excellent and precious.

Every godly man is gold, yea he is more precious then fine gold; *The fineſt Gold is but droſſe to Grace*; the wicked of the world are *reprobate ſilver*, or *refuſe ſilver* (*Jer.* 6. 30.) the Saints are *finer then Gold refined in the fire*, for they are precious, they are honourable, they are uſefull, they are dureable and laſting, they ſhall endure everlaſtingly, they are weighty in their worth, and their portion is an eternall weight of glory.

Secondly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *when I am tryed I ſhall come forth as gold.*

Obſerve.

A godly man is no looſer by being tryed, yea he gaines by it.

He who before was reputed but as droſſe, and had much droſſe in him, comes out of the tryall as gold, and loſeth nothing of his weight, worth, or beauty by being tryed, he only loſeth (a good loſſe) his droſſe and the rubbiſh of his corruptions. Grace is not onely grace ſtill, but more gracious even glorious after tryall. Some ſpeake of grace as if it were but droſſe, conſumeable in the fire; as if every temptation and tryall endaager'd it to an utter conſumption, or as if, like lead, it would quite evaporate, & ſpend to nothing in the fire. They ſticke not to affirme, that a true beleever may loſe all his graces, and how much ſoever enricht befo e by the Spirit, yet prove a bankrupt in ſpir tualls. *Job* was Confident that his gold would hold the tryall, both of the hoteſt afflictions, and of the ſtricteſt examinations. He had been tryed long in the furnace of affliction heated ſeaven times more then ordinary, and yet held his integrity, and though he ſhould come to tryall at the Judgement-ſeat of God which is more then ſeventy times ſeven times ſtricter then the Judgement-ſeate of man (according to truth) can be, yet he nothing doubted, that nothing (as to the general bent of his heart and frame of life) ſhould be found or appeare but integrity ſtill. That is but droſſie grace, natural grace, if not hypocritical grace, or a counterfeit only of grace, which abides not in the day of tryall. They who loſe the grace which they have ſhewed, had onely a ſhew of grace. Hypocrites ſhall loſe all at their tryall, their paint, their varniſh will not endure the fire, either of a laſting affliction, or of that laſt examinati-

mination; *when once a hypocrite is tryed, then he is ſham'd.* He may goe currant for pure gold a great while, but at laſt he appeares but as a gilded ſepulcher or droſſe of gold (*Pſal.* 119.119.) *Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like droſſe.* And the Lord ſpeaking of the degenerate houſe of *Iſrael* (Ezek. 22.18.) ſaith, *The houſe of Iſrael is to me become droſſe, all they are braſſe, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midſt of the furnace, they are even the droſſe (or droſſes) of ſilver;* That is, though they are a profeſſing people, and hold out my name, yet I having tryed and examined them throughly finde them to have nothing but a name of profeſſion; They being tryed are come forth like droſſe. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 3.13.) Allegorically ſhadowing out all ſorts of ſuperſtructive doctrine, by *Gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, wood, hay, ſtubble,* ſaith, *If any man build upon this foundation* (that is, *Chriſt*) *Gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, wood, hay, ſtubble, every mans worke ſhall be made manifeſt, for the day ſhall declare it, becauſe it ſhall be revealed by fire, and the fire ſhall try every mans worke of what ſort it is. If any mans worke abide which he hath built thereupon, he ſhall receive a reward; if any mans worke ſhall be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer loſs,* &c. The *wood, hay, ſtubble, ſhall be burnt,* but the *gold, ſilver, precious ſtones,* will abide the tryall of fire. Whether it be the fire of perſecution, tribulation, and temptation (nothing but holy truth can abide theſe fires) or the fire of the holy Spirit (who in Scripture is often compared to fire, and) who together with the light of the Word revealeth the foundnes or falſenes of all doctrines delivered by men, & like fire conſumes what is falſe, but gives a further brightnes & luſtre to the truth. Even truth untryed may be counted droſſe, but being tryed it comes forth like gold. Now, as the truth of doctrines, ſo the truth of perſons in their workes and graces will abide when they come to the Teſt or tryall; God who puts away all the wicked of the earth as droſſe, will gather up all the godly of the earth as Gold, when he hath tryed them, and try them he will. We read (*Dan.* 7.9, 10) how dreadfully God comes to Judgement; *I beheld till the thrones were caſt downe, and the ancient of dayes did ſit; his Throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheeles as burning fire; a fiery ſtreame iſſued and came forth from before him, the judgement was ſet, and the bookes were opened.* Which whether it be meant of the laſt Judgement, or of ſome ſpeciall Judgement upon a particular ſtate or oppreſſing

Dum probantur rati in flammam abeunt.

preſſing power, comes all to one as to the poynt in hand; while it ſhews that God in the tryall of men will examine their perſons, and their actions, as by fire. Of every ſuch tryall it may be ſaid (as *Malu.* 3.2, 3.) *Who may abide the day of his coming? and who ſhall ſtand when he appeareth?* (The Prophet ſpeakes of the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh, at which time he was alſo mighty in Spirit) *for he is like a refiners fire, and like fullers ſoape, and he ſhall ſit as a refiner and purifier of ſilver.* When Chriſt came in the fleſh to redeeme us, he came with fire alſo to purge and ſanctifie us, & he comes with fire whenſoever he comes in the Spirit to comfort and enlighten us, and at laſt when he comes in glory, he will come with fire to try, examine, and judge us. When he comes to try us thus, All the faithfull ſhall come forth as Gold, but the wicked and their works will burn and be conſumed. When Saints come to tryal at laſt they will ſtand, & when they are tryed here, they will mend; firſt, their Corruptions will be the more outed, and ſecondly, their graces will be the more acted. We may read his iſſue of their tryal (*Zech.* 13.9.) *And it ſhall come to paſſe that in all the Land, ſaith the Lord, two parts therein ſhall be cut off and dye, but the third ſhall be left therein.* Whether we take *the Land* in particular for *Iſrael* and the people of the *Jewes*, or typically for all profeſſors throughout the world, *two parts ſhall be cut off and dye, but the third ſhall be left therein.* And what wil God doe with them? or how will he deale with them? We may ſee what at the 9th verſe. *And I will bring the third part thorow the fire* (of affliction and examination) *and I will refine them as ſilver is refined, and try them as gold is tryed* (and what will be the iſſue of this?) *And they ſhall call on my name, and I will heare them.* Here faith and prayer (in which all graces are exerciſed) are put for all graces, When they are in this fire they ſhal *call on my name, and I will heare them, and I will ſay* (when they are in the fire) *it is my people, and they ſhall ſay, the Lord is my God.* They who pray in the fire of tryall, or in the fiery tryall, declare *evidently*, that they are Gold in the fire; but they to whom God ſaith in the fire of their tryalls, *ye are my people*, and they who (being ſtill in the ſame fire) can ſay, *the Lord is our God*; are declared both by God and themſelves *eminently*, that they are gold in the fire. They are as the choyceſt gold, as the Gold of *Ophir*, of whom the Lord ſaith, (by an act of diſtinguiſhing love) *ye are my people*, and

In igne docet manifeſtè ſe cum ſuis ſanctis ſic gerere, ſuos ſanctificare, Pſalm. 66.

and who can ſay to God (by an act of appropriating faith) *the Lord is our God.* Surely then Saints loſe nothing in the fire (but what is not worth the holding) while God finds and owns them, and they finde and own God in the fire.

Further, Some read this latter part of the verſe as an offer; *Probat me.* *Let him try me, and I ſhall come forth as gold*; as if *Job* had ſaid, I doe not refuſe, but deſire a tryall; *God knowes my way, the way that is in me, let him come and try me, yea I am ready to come to him for my tryall.*

Hence note;

A ſincere heart is willing to be tryed.

'Tis a great part of the worke of a godly man to try himſelfe and his workes, and it is one of his greateſt wiſhes, that God would try him, and his works. They who are ſincere are much in trying themſelves; *Let us ſearch and try our wayes* (ſay they) *and turne againe unto the Lord.* And they who are much in ſelf-tryall and Examination, are willing to be tryed and examined both by God and man; ſure enough, *They that try themſelves much, are not afraid of the tryall of man, no nor of the tryal of God.* If we compare the firſt verſe of the 139th *Pſalme* with the 23d, we ſhall ſee what an anſwer there is in them as to this poynt. At the firſt verſe *David* ſaith, *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me and known me*: at the 23. verſe he prayes; *Search me O God, and know my heart*; why did *David* pray thus to God; *Search me and know my heart?* having ſaid before, *Thou haſt ſearched me, and known me.* Seeing *David* knew that God had ſearched him, what needed he to pray that God would ſearch him? why did he begge God to do that which he had done already? The anſwer is at hand. *David* was a diligent ſelf-ſearcher, and therefore he was ſo willing to be ſearched, yea he delighted to be ſearched, by God; and that not (as was ſaid) becauſe himſelfe had done it already, but alſo becauſe he knew God could doe it better. He knew by his owne ſearch, that he did not live in any way of wickedneſſe againſt his knowledge, and yet he knew there might be ſome way of wickedneſſe in him that he knew not of. And therefore he doth not only ſay, *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts*; but he adds (*ver.* 24) *ſee if there be any wicked way* (or *any way of paine and griefe*) *in me.* (The ſame word ſignifies both

both, becauſe wicked wayes lead in the end to paine and griefe) *and lead me in the way everlaſting.* As if he had ſaid; Lord, I have ſearched my ſelfe; and can ſee no wicked way in me, but Lord thy ſight is infinitely clearer then mine, and if thou wilt but ſearch me, thou mayeſt ſee ſome wicked way in me which I could not ſee, and I would faine ſee and know the worſt of my ſelfe, that I might amend it and grow better, therefore Lord, if there be any ſuch way in me, cauſe me to know it alſo; O take that way out of me, and take me out of that way, *lead me in the way everlaſting. David* had tryed himſelfe, and he would againe be tryed by God, that he being better tryed, might become yet better. He found himſelfe Gold upon his own tryall, and yet he feared there might be ſome droſſe in him that he had not found, And now he would be re-tryed that he might come forth pureſt gold. Pure gold fears neither the furnace nor the fire, neither the Teſt nor the Touch-ſtone, nor is weighty gold afraid of the Ballance; He that is weight will be weight, how often ſoever he is weighed: he that is gold will be gold, how often ſoever he is tryed, and the oftner he is tryed the purer Gold he will be; what he is he will be, and he would be better then he is. Every man of *Jobs* mettal ſaith or may ſay, *Let him try me and I ſhall come forth as Gold.*

JOB, CHAP. 23. Verſ. 11, 12.

My foot hath held his ſteps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

Neither have I gone back from the commandement of his lips, I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.

AT the 21. and 22. verſes of the former Chapter, *Eliphaz* having ſharply rebuked *Job*, gave him very wholeſome and holy counſell. *Acquaint thy ſelf now with him, and be at peace, receive the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thy heart.* In theſe two verſes *Job* profeſſeth that he had done ſo; that he had kept cloſe to God followed him ſtep by ſtep, that he had not declined, or turned back, and that he had done all this out of pure love to the word. So that each member of this context ſeems to carry a direct anſwer to every member of that counſel which *Eliphaz* had there given him; As firſt, to that of *Eliphaz*, *Acquaint thy ſelfe with God*, (he ſaith) *I have held his ſteps.* That man takes and holds neere acquaintance with another, of whom it may be affirmed, that he treads in or *holds his very ſteps.* Again, *Eliphaz* adviſed *Job* thus; *Receive the law at his mouth*; *Job* anſwers, *I have not gone back from the commandement of his lips*, &c.

Or thus;

Firſt, *He that takes hold of the ſteps of God, acquaints himſelfe with God.*

Secondly, *He that keeps the way of God and declines not from it, is at peace with God.*

Thirdly, *He that goeth not back from the commandement of his lips, receives the Law at his mouth.*

Fourthly, He that *eſteemeth the word of God more then his neceſſary food*, hath ſurely *laid up the word of God in his heart.*

Job profeſſeth in theſe two verſes that he had done all this, and therefore he had already done what *Eliphaz* preſſeth him to doe. His whole converſation had exactly hit the counſell given him.

Verſe 11.

Verſ. 11. *My foot hath held his ſteps.*

My foot. We are not to take the word *foot*, ſtrictly, for that ſpeciall member of the body ſo called; but by the *foot* we are to underſtand the whole man; *my foot*, that is, *I my ſelfe have held his ſteps*, I have held them; And he means ſuch a holding as hath a kinde of honeſt pertinaciouſneſſe in it; or a reſolvednaſſe not to let goe what is held, a reſolute holding, a cleaving faſt to, a holding with a kinde of violence, ſuch as *Jacob* expreſſed to the Angel (*Gen.* 32. 26.) *I will not let thee goe except thou bleſſe me.*

Cum dicit, pes meus, pro toto hominem accipiendum eſſe dixiſſet, ego apprehendi gressum eius. Druſ.

Verbum ſignificat aliquid vehementer detineri, ne labatur, aut fugiat, aut fluat. Bold. אחזה

My foote hath held.

To lay hold is the proper action of the hand, not of the foote, and it is uſed here onely as it ſignifies the keeping of a thing cloſe and faſt any way, ſo as not to part with it; or as it imports, a conſtant walking with God.

My foote hath held his ſteps, or *upon his ſteps.*

The word which ſignifies *to goe*, ſignifies alſo *to be happy* or *bleſſed*, and the reaſon is, becauſe our way or motion ſheweth what our end and reſt ſhall be; our happineſſe in the end lieth virtually in our way.

But what were thoſe *ſteps* that his foote took hold of? Steps in the Text may be taken two wayes.

Veſtigia dei idem ſignificare, prærunt quod via dei, ſc. illius præcepta & legem, quam nos tenendam commonſtrat. Pined.

Firſt, For thoſe ſteps which God hath appointed man to take, walking as and where God would have him; ſo theſe ſteps are the ſame with the law or way of God: not actively for the ſteps which God takes, but paſſively for the ſteps which he directs and appoints us to take.

Greſſum ejus accipe paſſivè id eſt ab eo deſinitum & conſtratum. Jun. *Veſtigia dei ſunt divinæ actiones quibus*

Secondly, We may expound theſe ſteps for Gods owne ſteps, not for the ſteps which he ſhews us in his word that we ſhould take, but for the ſteps which he ſhews in his practiſe, or in his example that himſelfe hath taken. *My foot hath held his ſteps*; ſo to follow the ſteps of another is to imitate him, and to follow the ſteps of God is to imitate him; the ſteps of God are thoſe holy actings wherein he goeth before us, and ſets us an example. Some of the workes of God are a rule, his actions are directions to us. Then *Jobs* meaning is, I have imitated God, and followed his example

ille preit; vel ſunt ejus eſſe Elus ad extra, ſc. Charitatis, clementiæ, juſtitiæ veritatis. Pined.

ample in all things that are imitable by man. I have ſo much acquainted my ſelfe with God, and have been ſo familiar with him that I have as it were coppied out his way in my life and converſation. Thus he ſpeaks of God as leading the way, and going before us; and (ſaith he) I have not ſatisfied my ſelf to follow him at large, or in the ſame common path, but I have ſet my feete in his very ſteps, or I have followed him ſtep by ſtep.

Hence note.

That a godly man doth example himſelfe by God.

He followeth the way of God in his workes, as well as in his word, or he obeyeth God doing as well as commanding. Many of the workes of God are infinitely beyond our imitation, yet he works ſo in other things that he hath deſcended to our imitation. And though we cannot follow God in any thing as to an equality, yet we may follow him in many things as to the ſimilitude of his workings; we may go the ſame way that he goeth, and take the ſame ſteps that he hath taken, though we cannot take them in that perfection, nor goe with ſuch exactnes as he hath gone before us. A childe may write the ſame letters, the ſame words and lines, wch the moſt acurate penman or artiſt in writing hath preſcribed him for a copie, and ſo the child may be ſaid to hold the ſteps of his Maſter, letter for letter, word for word, line for line, though there be a wide difference diſcerneable between their writings. To follow God is our duty. *Godlineſſe is Godlikeneſſe*, or, *an imitation of God, And practicall Chriſtianity is nothing elſe but our imitation of Chriſt*, and that not onely in doing but in ſuffering (1 *Pet.* 2. 21.) *For even hereunto are we called; becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example that we ſhould follow his ſteps.* Chriſt is not only a principle of holineſſe in us, or our ſpirituall life, but he is alſo a pattern of holineſſe according to which we ought to live. And the ſame Apoſtle repreſents the holineſſe of God, both as a rule and as a motive of that holineſſe which ſhould be acted by us (1 *Ep.* 1. 15, 16) *As he that hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation*, becauſe it is written (*Lev.* 11. 14.) *Be ye holy for I am holy.* To be holy *as God is* in all manner of converſation, is ſtedfaſtly to hold the ſteps of God. And when (as Chriſt exhorts, *Matth.* 5. 55.) *We are mercifull as our father which is in heaven is mercifull.* When as the

Sequere deum. Epict.

the Apoſtle exhorts (*Eph.* 4. 32.) *We forgive as God for Chriſt ſake hath forgiven us*; when we are patient and long-ſuffering one towards another, as God is towards us all, then we take hold of his ſteps; this ſhould be our buſineſſe every day, to follow God in his word, and in his workes, *to follow him fully.* It is ſaid of *Caleb* (*Num.* 14. 24.) *My ſervant Caleb hath another ſpirit, he hath followed me fully.* Here ſome may object, to follow the counſel of God fully, is the duty of all, but to follow the example of God is ſurely beyond the attainement of any. This ſeems to be a hight of holineſſe too high for man, For if *Solomon* ſaid (*Eccl.* 2. 12.) *What can the man doe that cometh after the King? even that which hath been already done*, or (more cloſe to the Originall) *in thoſe things which have been already done.* How much more may we ſay, What can the man doe that comes after God the King of Kings? can he doe that which hath been done already? I anſwer, no man can paralel the workes of God, but all men are called to imitate him in his works; though we cannot follow him with equall ſteps, yet we may follow the equity and holines of his ſteps. This *Job* did and we (through grace) may doe. *My foote hath held his ſteps,*

His way have I kept, and not declined.

The way of God is his Law, in that he will have us to walke, and that is called *his way*, becauſe he hath preſcribed it, and is the author of it: as that is mans way wherein he walks, ſo that is Gods way wherein he will have man to walk; *Bleſſed is the undefiled in the way* (Pſal. 119. 1.) What the way is, he tells us in the next words, *Bleſſed are they that keepe his teſtimonies, and who walk in the Law of the Lord.* His law and teſtimonies are his way: now ſaith *Job*, *As I have held his ſteps*, or followed his example, ſo *I have kept his way*, that is, I have done that which he hath commanded. The way of God is put ſometimes in Scripture for that which himſelfe hath done (*Ezek.* 18. 25.) *Heare O houſe of Iſrael, is not my way equall*, that is, the way wherein I my ſelf have gone, the way of my diſpenſations to you, both in rewarding and punishing. And as the workes of providence, ſo the worke of Creation is called the way of God (*Pro.* 8. 22.) *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way*, (that is, before he came forth in the worke of Creation) *before his workes of old*; his way and his workes are the ſame, or his workes are his way. But in this Text (as

Via dei & hominis Junior.
1 *Proximè & gressus.*
2 *Pro ipſa via ſtrata.*

(as I touch't before) we may rather take *way* for that which God would have us doe, or for the way in which we ought to walke. And ſo we have the compleatnes of *Jobs* obedience, he imitated the example and he obeyed the command of God.

His way have I kept.

Yet further, There is a twofold keeping of the way of God; Firſt, by practice and obedience, thus we keep the way of God by ſubmitting to it.

Secondly, There is a keeping the way of God by protection and defence; Thus we keep the way of God, when we ſtand up to maintaine it. We may take it here in both ſenſes; and in both, doubtleſſe, *Jobs* Spirit was led out to *keepe the way of God.*

Hence note.

A godly man keepes cloſe to the word of God.

He keepes cloſe to it by obeying it, and he keepes it cloſe by defending it; and this he doth as *Job* did it univerſally (for ſo this indefinite propoſition, *His way have I kept*, is to be underſtood) it was not this or that way, but any or every way of God which he kept. And thus a godly man keepes the way of God, though it be a difficult and (to the fleſh) an uneaſie way, though it be (among men) a reproachfull, and ignominious way, though it be (as to his outward concernements) a diſadvantageous and dangerous way, yet he keepes it: he that is through with God, doth not onely keepe thoſe wayes which ſuit with his owne pleaſure and credit, with the ſafety of his owne intereſts and accommodations in the world, but if the way of God lye through difficulties, through dangers and diſgraces, he will yet keep it. And if we thus keepe the way of God, we may be ſure, that the way of God, or rather the God of this way will keepe us, and keepe us in perfect peace, in ſpirituall freedome, ſafety, and honour, though we have trouble in and from the world. *His way have I kept*, and which doth heighten his obedience, care and zeale in keeping it.

He addes,

And not declined.

The word ſignifies, *to be unſteady*, or to move every way; As if he had ſaid, *I have kept his wayes ſtedfaſtly and unmoveably.* *Job* ſpeakes

ſpeakes both in the affirmative, *I have kept*, and in the negative, *I have not declined.* Some keep the wayes of God a while, but they keepe not on, much leſſe doe they keep up in keeping them. There is a twofold declining. Firſt, a declining from the way of God to evill and ſinfull wayes; and theſe are of two ſorts, firſt, erroneous opinions; ſecondly, wicked practices; ſecondly, there is a declining in the way of God, when though we keep the good way, yet we are not ſo good in the way as we were, but ſlacke our pace and cool in our zeal to the good wayes of God. We may expound *Jobs* negative in reference to both theſe: as if he had ſaid, I have neither gone out of the way of God, nor have I been ſlothfull in it. 'Tis the higheſt commendation of man, thus to keep the way of God, *and not decline.*

Hence note

A godly man is, or ought to be, and 'tis his honour to be ſteady in a good way.

Perſeverance is our Crowne. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15. 58) *Exhorts to be ſteady and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the worke of the Lord.* We ſhould be alwayes moving in the worke of the Lord, but never moving out of the worke of the Lord: we ſhould be as a rock in regard of ſtedfaſtnes, and as fire in regard of activeneſſe. The Author to the *Hebrews* (Chap. 10. 23.) gives this admonition to believers, *Let us hold faſt the profeſſion of our faith without wavering*, or without declining. There are ſome of whom we may ſay, they hold nothing, they hold no profeſſion, they dare not make a profeſſion leſt they ſhould be bound to ſtand to it, or they ſtand not to that which they have made; and as they hold no profeſſion, ſo they hold no poſition, but as to the doctrine of faith are meer ſcepticks, they are alwayes querying, but never concluding. The Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſome (2 *Tim* 3. 7.) *who are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*; and there are others ever learning, but never willing to declare their knowledge of the truth; and they who hold nothing in doctrin, will not hold long in practice. Therefore ſaith the Apoſtle; *Let us hold faſt our profeſſion*, let us be ſteady in it, and that without wavering. And this is the great argument which the Apoſtle carries through that whole Epiſtle, to eſtabliſh the Saints, that ſo they might hold faſt, without wavering, and

declining in the profession of the faith. Let us take heed of either of those waverings and declinings, before explained. First, Let us not decline in the way, but keep up in the same degree of holines and love to Christ. The Church of *Ephesus* is charged with this sort of declining; and therefore after Christ had given that Church a great and a deserved commendation (*Rev.* 2. 2.) *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not beare them which are evill, and hast tryed them that say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them lyars*; yet Christ comes with a rebuking, *nevertheless* (at the 4th vers) *I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love*, that is, *thou hast declined* from, or abated in thy first heate of love. *Ephesus* did not totally forsake, nor cast off Christ out of her love; *Ephesus* did not choose other lovers, nor say, she would have no more to doe with Christ: The chiefe object of her love was the same, but her actings were not the same. The streames of her affection did not run into another channel, but they were fallen and ebb'd in their former channel. 'Tis sad, when Saints decline thus; we should keepe up to the same height, to the same heat, to the same degree of love without declining, we should not onely run at first setting out, but continue running, or as the Apostle speaks. (*Heb.* 12. 1.) *Run with patience*, that is, run constantly, or with perseverance, *the race that is set before us*. They that run in a worldly race, the neerer they come to the Goale, the faster they run, and the more they strive; so should we in our holy race: we should still be growing and *encreasing with the encrease of God*, A Saint should be thankfull for the least degree, but he should not sit downe in the greatest degree, he hath already attained unto. And though some who have grace doe not actually reach after more, yet they who say they have enough, or need no more, give too cleare an evidence against themselves, that they have none at all. As the higher degrees of grace (under a temptation or desertion) may be unthriving and unstriving after perfection, so the lowest degree of saving grace is (in its owne nature) thriving and striving after more perfection. He that beleeves, truely, would beleeve more, and he that loves truly, would love more and more, till his love become a vehement flame, so vehement a flame that many waters shall not be able to quench it, nor the floods (of trouble and persecution from the world) drowne it.

Secondly,

Secondly, as we should thus take heed of declining in the way of grace, so we should much more take heed, that we decline not from the way of grace, or as the Apostle *Peter* expresseth it (2 *Ep.* 2. 31.) *that we turne not from the holy commandement delivered unto us*. This declining or turning from the commandements, is twofold; first, to the right hand; secondly, and to the left. The Scripture gives warning against both (*Josh.* 1. 7.) *Be thou strong and very corragious, that thou mightst observe, and doe according to all the Law which Moses commanded, turn not from it to the right hand, or to the left*. Again (*Pro.* 4. 25, 26, 27.) *Let thine eye look right on, and let thine eye lids look streight before thee; ponder the path of thy feete, and let all thy wayes be established, turn not to the right hand, nor to the left, remove thy foote from evill*; As if he had said, there is evill both on the right hand, and on the left, therefore turne neither to the one, nor to the other, that thou mayest *remove thy foot from evill*. But some may say, What is here meant by the right hand, & what by the left hand, what are these declining, or turnings? I answer; To turne *to the right hand*, notes excesse, when we will take upon us to doe more then God hath commanded, when we will needs over-doe, this is to decline to the right hand; for though, when man hath done his utmost through grace in this life (considering his indwelling corruption) he alwayes falls short of that exactnes which the Law requires, and so cannot possibly exceed the Law in holiness; yet all they may be said to act beyond the command, or to out act the Law of God, as to the matter of their obedience, who do that which God never commanded, nor ever *came into his heart* (as the Prophet speakes, *Jer.* 7 31.) to command them. They who thus do what God requires not, and as if God had been too scant in his rules, will needs give a new rule either to themselves or others, and as if God had not given them lawes enow, will (in this sence) be a law to themselves or others, either in matters of practise or worship (And so indeed make void the Law of God by their tradition) these exceeders are the men who turne to the right hand, though indeed (except they repent this rashnesse) themselves are likely to be set upon the left hand. Men never act more left-handedly then when they thus turne to the right hand, nor doe they ever wrong God more, then when they doe that which is right in their owne eyes: men never shew themselves

ſo fooliſh, as when they will be wiſer then God.

Againe, Declining or turning to the left hand implyeth a ſin in defect, when we doe leſſe then God commands, when we ſhorten, and ſtreighten the will of God in our obedience to it. Every naturall man thinks a little much, yea he thinks much to doe a little; and may therefore be ſaid to turn to the left hand, becauſe that is the unworking hand, or the hand wch doth the leaſt worke. A naturall man either makes the Law of God void by doing that which is againſt it, or he lets it lye void by not doing it, and would be glad that this talent committed to him might for ever be wrapt up in a napkin, or be buryed in the earth. Both theſe turnings, whether to the right hand, or to the left, are evill. The way of holineſs, the good way lieth ſtreight forward, right on; It hath no turning either to the right hand, nor to the left. All the wayes of ſinne are called *crooked wayes*, and they are our owne wayes. (*Pſal.* 125 5.) *As for ſuch as turne aſide to their crooked wayes, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.* The Pſalmiſt calls them, *Their crooked wayes*; that is, wayes of their own deviſing, whereas the way of holines is the Lords way. To exceed or to doe more, to be deficient or to doe leſſe then God requires, both theſe are crooked wayes the way of the Lord lyes ſtreight forward, right before us. (*Pro.* 28. 18.) *Who ſo walketh uprightly ſhall be ſaved, but he that is perverſe (or crooked) in his wayes ſhall fall at once.* The motion of a godly man is like that of the kine that carryed the Arke (1 *Sam.* 6. 12.) *Who tooke the ſtreight way to the way of Bethſhemeſh, and went along the high way, lowing as they went, and they turned not aſide to the right hand or to the left.*

But you will ſay Do not good men, even the beſt of good men, decline ſometimes, and goe aſide? or doth it argue every man to be wicked who declines at any time? I anſwer: *Job* ſpeakes of what he had not done, not of what it was impoſſible for him to doe; he had not declined, yet he might have declined. We find many declinings among the godly; how many are there that decline in degrees, who are godly in the maine; They love ſtill, but they have not the ſame warmth of love, the ſame heate of affection; They obey ſtill, but they have not the ſame ſtrength of obedience. There may be a declineing alſo not onely in the way, but from the way, to the right hand ſometimes, and ſometimes to the

the left; there may be an exceeding, and there may be a coming ſhort in thoſe, as to actions, who as to their ſtate, are come home to God; theſe things are poſſible, yea common, but we ſpeak of what many godly men doe, and what ſhould be the aime, and deſigne of every godly man, that is, to keep the way of God, and not to decline, to keep himſelfe up in ſpirituall ſtrength, and to keep himſelfe on in a ſpirituall courſe; yea every godly man may, and can ſay as *David* did (*Pſal.* 18. 21.) *I have kept the wayes of the Lord and have not wickedly departed from my God.* Though every godly man cannot ſay as godly *Job* did, *I have kept his way, and not declined*, yet every godly man may ſay as *David*, *I have kept his wayes, and have not wickedly departed from my God*: we ſhould be afraid of declining and decaying, we ſhould ſtrive to be alwayes advancing and encreaſing. And as Saints are under a command to be ſuch, ſo they are under a promiſe to be ſuch, (*Pſal.* 92 12, 13, 14.) *The righteous ſhall flouriſh like a Palme tree: he ſhall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon. Thoſe that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God, they ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age: they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.* Here is not only a mention of growing, but of flouriſhing, and here's flouriſhing three times mentioned, and 'tis growing & flouriſhing not onely like a tree, but like a Palme tree, (which flouriſheth under oppreſſion) and like a Cedar (not growing in ordinary places, but) in *Lebanon*, where were the goodlieſt Cedars. Nor doth the Spirit promiſe here a flouriſhing in boughes and leaves onely (as ſome trees doe, and doe no more) but in fruit; And this not onely fruit for once in a yeare, or one yeare, but they *ſtill bring forth fruit*, and that not onely in the yeares of their youth, or beginnings in grace, but *in old age*, and that not only in the entrance of that ſtate which is called *old age*, threeſcore years, but that which the Scripture calls the perfection of *old age*, threeſcore yeares and ten, as the learned Hebrewes obſerve upon the word uſed in the Pſalme. What a *divine climax* doth the Spirit of God make in this Scripture, to ſhew that the godly man, as to his ſtate, is ſo farre from declining, that he is ſtill climbing higher and higher? And if any ſhall aske how comes it to paſſe then, that ſome godly men are obſerved not only by themſelves, but by others, to decline often in and ſometimes from the wayes of God?

Ian-

I anſwer, theſe declinings may be aſſigned to ſeverall Cauſes.

Firſt, To the power of ſome Corruption remaining much unmortified in them; as in a garden when the weeds grow high, the good herbs decline; And as in a field, when the weeds are ſtrong, the corne is weake; ſo it is here; the prevailing or growing of Corruption, is the declining of Grace in degree, and by reaſon of it, ſome (for a time) decline from the way.

Secondly, Declinings are from the prevalency of temptation; while Satan plieth ſome with temptation, he turneth them out of the way, or cauſeth them to walke but ſlowly in it. As temptation is a tryall of, ſo a hindrance unto grace, yea though corruption be kept much downe, yet ſome through a violent guſt of temptation have been over-borne.

Thirdly, Declinings are cauſed in the good by the example of thoſe that are evill, therefore the Apoſtle gives that Caution (*Rom.* 12. 2.) *Not to be conformable to the world.* A godly man is apt enough to write by a falſe copie, and to doe as he ſees the world doth. What was all their way, or their onely way before converſion, they after converſion (through neglect of their watch) may be found ſtepping into, or taking a ſtep or two in. Before converſion our whole courſe, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Eph.* 2. 2.) *is according to the courſe of this world*; And the examples of the world have drawne many aſide, after they have come out from the world. The faſhions and vanities of the world, in pride and pleaſure, are very drawing. All examples, eſpecially evill examples (like the Loadſtone) have an attractive vertue in them; and many of the godly have been drawne aſide thus, and have declined, with much ſcandal, for a while from the way of God.

Fourthly, Declinings are ſometimes from afflictions; and thoſe we may conſider of two ſorts, perſonall, or publique: both or either of theſe have cauſed many to decline. The cold froſt of affliction hath nipped the graces of ſome, & made them to turne aſide from the way of God. Therefore the Church (having reported her great troubles) ſpeaks it as an argument of much ſincerity towards God, and ſtrength of Grace received from him. (*Pſ.* 44. 17, 18.) *All this is come upon us* (that is, all theſe common calamities and afflictions) *yet have we not forgotten thee, nor dealt falſely in thy Covenant; our hearts are not turned back, neither have our ſteps declined from thy way*; As if ſhe had ſaid; Theſe afflictions have

have been ſtrong temptations upon us to cauſe us to decline from thy wayes, but through grace we have kept our ground, and remained conſtant in thy Covenant, *yea though thou haſt ſore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the ſhadow of death.* As many, yea moſt of the Saints have improved under the croſſe, ſo there have been ſome who either through their preſent unbeleefe, or forgetfulnes of *the exhortation which* (as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Heb.* 12. 5.) *ſpeaketh unto them as unto children*, have had their faintings and declinings under it.

Fifthly, Others decline through proſperity, and worldly injoyments; when they grow rich in temporalls, they grow poorer in ſpiritualls. As their outward man encreaſeth, ſo their inner man decayeth, & as they flouriſh in the fleſh, ſo they wither in ſpirit. Hence holy *Agur* prayed (*Pro.* 30. 8, 9) *Give me not poverty, leſt I be poore and ſteale, and take the name of God in vain*, (that would be a ſad declining) *give me not riches, leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay who is the Lord?* That's a ſadder declining then the former. Povertie endangers grace much, but riches more. To be rich or great in the world, is a great temptation; *Food convenient* is the moſt ſweet and moſt untemptationleſſe condition. As hypocrites fall quite off from God when they come on much in the world; ſo the ſincere may be much hindred in their way. And as many godly men have declined through their owne proſperitie, ſo ſome have declined, or at leaſt have been in great danger of declining by the proſperity of others. *David* was ready to decline from God, when he ſaw the proſperitie of ungodly men. (*Pſal.* 73. 2.) *As for me my feete were alm ſt gone, my ſteps had well nigh ſlip't, when I ſaw the proſperitie of the wicked.* *David* was almoſt downe, when he ſaw the wicked up. Their ſtanding had almoſt given him a fall; *My ſteps* (ſaith he) *had well nigh ſlipt*; now if it put *David*, a man eminent in godlineſſe ſo hard to it to keep his ſtanding (all the grace in his heart, and aſſiſtance from God could ſcarce hold him up) how much more may they who come far ſhort of *David*, decline by ſeeing the proſperity of wicked men? are not they ready to conclude, ſurely we ſhall thrive, and doe well enough, though we doe as others doe, who do not trouble themſelves in a ſtrictnes about matters of religion as we have done, *Verily* (as it followes at the 13. verſe) *we have cleanſed our heart in vaine, and waſhed our hands in innocency.*

If we had spared our paines of labour, we could not have endured more paine of trouble; *for all the day long have we been plagued, and chastned every morning.* Such arguings as these shew great declinings. Yet they who are sincere will soon recover themselves againe, and say as *David* after he had reviewed this Temptation (*ver.* 15.) *If we say we will speake thus, we should offend against the Generation of the righteous.*

Now seeing the Godly are so many wayes endangered to declining, let us be warned of it, and beware of it. These are declining times, many professors have shamed themselves, and the profession of the Gospel. He is a Christian indeed that can say in truth as *Job* did, *I have kept his words and not declined*; they that knew me many yeares agoe may finde me in as good, yea in a better plight then I was then. Hypocrites and true beleevers may look and act very like one another, but as the nature of their estates have alwayes a vast difference to the understanding, so the event gives a vast difference between them to the eye. Hypocrites keep the word of God a while, but they ever decline in the end finally from it, and sometimes throw it off in the way totally. When they are in the way they grow weary of it, and a small matter working either upon their hopes or fears, will put them quite out of it. Every difficulty, every danger is to them a Lion in the way, causing them to decline from it; whereas to those that are sincere, difficulties are not stops, but incitements and spurres, they doe but provoke their zeale, they cannot quench it. And hence the holy Apostle sends a challenge (*Rom.* 8. 35.) to all the troubles, afflictions, and evills in the world: he bids them doe their worst, and when they have done it, they shall not be *able to separate him from the love of God*, neither from the love wherewith God loved him, or from that love wherewith he loved God.

I have kept his wayes and not declined.

Secondly, Observe.

That sinne is a declining from the way of God.

That's the Apostles definition (1 *Joh.* 3. 4.) *Sin is the transgression of the Law*; And transgression is a going aside, or a going over the line by which God hath chalked us out our way. God hath not left us at our liberty, though he hath left us (as the Apostle *James* calls it, *Chap.* 1. 25.) *a perfect law of liberty.* He hath

hath not left us to travell over hedge and ditch, but hath shewed us our way, *a high way and a way* (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 35. 8.) *And it shall be called the way of holinesse, the way faring men, though fooles, shall not erre therein.* Yet fooles are alwayes erring from it, all their walkings are wandrings, and their goings are goings astray who walk and go on in a sinfull way. The word which signifies sin in the Hebrew, imports most properly the missing of a mark; because sinning is a missing of the mark, and a declining from the way, *I have kept his way, and not declined.*

Vers. 12. *Neither have I gone backe from the commandement of his lips*, &c.

Job proceeds with his negative profession having said before, *I have not declined*, he saith the same thing againe in other words; *I have not gone back from the commandement of his lips.* See, how often he repeats, and inculcates this poynt, both that he might be believed, and that he might shew how confident he was in the uprightnes of his owne heart; *I have not declined, neither have I gone back.* By these various expressions, and often repitions, *Job* sets forth in generall the exactnes of his care in keeping close to God; *neither have I gone back.* The word signifies both to depart, and to touch; and some put both significations together here, implying such a departure from a thing or person, as not at all to touch or come neere it againe; which is a totall apostacy, or desertion from it; As if *Job* had said, *I have not apostatized from the wayes of God.* But this seems lesse then what he spake before; for having said, *I did not decline*, what need he say, *I did not apostatize*, for he that doth not so much as decline, is farre from apostatising. I answer, that in this negative there is that ordinary figure extenuation, speaking lesse then is intended, or intending more then is expressed, and so, *not to goe back from*, is to goe forward in, or to proceed on in the commandements of God; and so the sense riseth higher; *I have kept his way, and have not declined, neither have I gone backe from his commandement*; I have kept close to it without the least willing declension. I have not laid the commandement out of my hand, much lesse have I put it out of my heart. And then we are to interpret this negative, *I have not gone backe*, by this affirmative, *I have stood to thy commandements constantly and*

מוט *recessit, decessit, palpavit, tetegit; ita recedere a re aliqua, ut tangi aut contrectari nequeat.*

Non recedere a mandatis, est illa opere complere tenere, non dimittere de manu aut actione. Pisc.

and resolvedly. The Scripture is full of such negatives. Thus when the Lord makes that promise (*Joel.* 2. 26.) *My people shall never be ashamed*; It seems to be but a small matter, that the people of God shall not be ashamed, but the meaning is, they shall be highly honoured, they shall have a name and reputation in the world, they shall make their boast in & of me their God all the day long. So when the Apostle gives that negative counsell, (1 *Thes.* 5 18.) *Despise not prophesie*, his purpose is to exhort the *Thessalonians*, and us in them to the readiest embraces and highest estimations of it. Not to despise, is to *honour prophesie*, that is, the preaching of the word in a due exposition and application of it to *exhortation, and edification and comfort.* So then, there is much more in these words, *I have not gone back from the commandement*; then thus, I have not turned, or apostatized from the commandement, I have not throwne up, nor abjured my profession; *Jobs* meaning is, *I have kept strictly and firmely to it, I have asserted it, and affirmed it, and will maintaine it to the end*: as I have hitherto lived, so I am purposed to dye in the obedience of it. *I have not gone back from the commandement of his lips.* We finde the word is used in such a signification (*Prov.* 17. 13.) *Who so rewardeth evill for good, evill shall not depart from his house*, or *evill shall not goe back from his house.* As evill shall come, so evill shall not goe back, he shall not be able to dismisse it when it cometh: evill shall keep close to his house, dwell and abide in his house, or hang upon him like an unwelcome guest, he shall not get it out for ever. Again, (*Isa* 54. 10.) *The mountaines shall depart, and the hills shall be removed, but my kindnesse shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.* Thus the Lord assures his people of the grace and good of the new Covenant; *The mountains shall depart*, that is, though the mountaines depart, or let them depart, and *the hills remove, yet my kindnes shall not depart*, or it shall not go back from you; that is, my kindnesse shall imbrace you, stick close to you, and abide with you for ever; so here, *I have not gone backe*, that is, I have imbraced, and stuck to *the commandement of his lips.* We also finde such a sense of the word, (*Mich.* 2. 3.) *Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, against this family doe I advise an evill, from which you shall not remove* (or withdraw) *your neckes*; that is, the evill which I devise against you shall remaine upon you, and stick by you,

Semper fa-bi inest in illis verbis vis & emphasis.

you, ye shall not get this yoake off your necks, nor your neckes out of this collar; it shall be an abiding evill, which will not goe back; as ye have not gone backe from the evill of sin, so ye shall not goe backe from the evill of punishment, it will not remove from you, nor shall ye remove from it. So here, *I have not gone backe*, or removed my necke from the commandement of God, I have not stirred a foote from it.

Yet further, that which before, he called *the way of God*, here he calls *the commandement of his lips*; lips are the instruments of speech. God is a spirit, and hath no corporeall parts; the Scripture speakes thus of God after the manner of men; because men speake with their lips (their lips being a principall instrument of speech) therefore the commandement which God hath made knowne, and spoken (in a way peculiar to himselfe) is called *the commandement of his lips.* Mr *Broughton* translates strictly to the letter; *His lips lawes I cast not off.* And when *Job* calleth the commandements of God, *the commandements of his lips*, it hath a great force in it, to oblige man to reverence, and obey them. They are not commandements which he hath published by others onely, he hath also published them himselfe. They are *the commandements of his lips*, that is, those commandements which as he made and others speake in his name, so he hath spoken them too. He is both the Author and the publisher of them. (*Exod.* 20. 1.) *And God spake all these words and said. David* (Psal. 66. 13, 14.) puts that emphatically upon his holy vowes, to shew how he was engaged to performe them; *I will goe into thy house with burnt offerings, and I will pay thee my vowes that my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken when I was in trouble*: As if he had said, my vowes are not only such as I have conceived in my heart, and resolved in my owne thoughts, but I have spoken them out and declared them openly, therefore it lyes upon me not only in conscience, but in honour to pay and performe them. If we must do what our lips have uttered, much more must we doe what God hath uttered with his lips. *Lip-labour will not answer those commandements which are the labour of Gods lips.* Therefore saith *Job*, *I have not turned back from the commandements of his lips.*

Præceptum labiorum, i. e. *præceptum labiis ejus pronunciatum.*

Genitivus adjective vel efficientis. Pisc.

Emphaticus est ad majorē præceptorūdei commendationē referentiam & observantiam, sc. quod ab ipsis dei ore prolatus. Bold.

Hence Observe;

First, *A godly mans way is forward, he doth not turne backe:* He doth not decline, either to the right hand or to the left,

much leſſe doth he goe back; he doth not onely ſtay where he was, but he is better then he was, his courſe is onward and forward. (*Job* 17. 9) *The righteous ſhall hold on his way.* It is bad enough not to goe forward, but to goe backward is farre worſe, *If any draw back* (ſaith God, *Heb.* 10. 38) *my ſoule ſhall have no pleaſure in them.* And what pleaſure can their ſoules take, in whom the ſoule of God takes no pleaſure? To draw back is perdition, as they who draw backe are the moſt forward to deſtroy others (*Hoſ.* 5. 2.) *The revoulters are profound to make ſlaughter*) ſo they ſhall be ſure to be deſtroyed themſelves. The people of *Iſrael* in their travels through the wildernes to *Canaan*, did often diſcover this ſpirit of Apoſtacy (Pſal. 78. 41.) *They turned back and tempted God*; We find them at a conſultation about it. (*Numb.* 14. 4.) *They ſaid one to another, let us make us a Captaine, and let us returne into Egypt.* Our Lord Jeſus had ſuch a ſort of men, who followed him in perſon (*Joh.* 6 66.) *From that time many of his Diſciples went back from him, and walked no more with him.* They were Diſciples who went back, and there were many of them, ſo many that Chriſt (in the next verſe) *ſaid to the twelve, Will ye alſo goe away? Then Peter anſwered, Lord, whether ſhall we goe? thou haſt the words of eternall life*: As if he had ſaid, we cannot mend our ſelves whether ſoever we go; why then ſhould we goe from thee? *As a Godly man goeth on, ſo he ſeeth reaſon why he ſhould.* 'Tis as irrationall as ſinfull, to goe back from him who hath the words of eternall life, or from the commandement of his lips, who hath given the promiſe of life. The Apoſtle *Paul* had a reaching ſpirit, and he was alwayes reaching forward (*Phil.* 3. 12, 13.) *Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus*; As if he had ſaid, I would to the utmoſt anſwer the deſigne which Chriſt had upon me, when he firſt t oke hold of me effectually by his grace. *Paul* was ſo far from going backe, that he forgot what was backward. Some remember what is paſt, or what they have done, ſo much, that they forget what is to be done. *But* (ſaith *Paul*) *this one thing I doe, forgetting thoſe things which are behinde, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before, I preſſe towards the marke; for the price of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* The marke and the price are alwayes before us, there is no coming at the marke, nor winning of the price by turning back. (*Pro.* 4. 18.) *The path of the juſt is like the ſhining (or morning) light, which ſhineth more and more unt the perfect day.* The path of the unjuſt (if it have any light in it) is but like the evening light, which ſhines leſſe & leſſe, which declines and goeth downward, till the perfect night, and till himſelfe be wrapt up in everlaſting darkneſſe. The Sun in the firmament went back by miracle for a ſigne to *Hezekiah* that he ſhould recover the health of his body. But if we ſee any go back who have heretofore ſhined like the Sun in a Goſpel profeſſion, we have juſt cauſe to looke upon it as a ſad ſymptome, that their ſoules are in a dangerous, if not in an irrecoverable condition. *I have not gone back* (ſaith *Job*) *from the commandement of his lips.*

Againe, from all theſe expreſſions, in that *Job* ſpeaking of the ſame thing, calls it, *the way of God, the commandement of his lips*, and (in the latter part of this verſe) *the word of his mouth*, to which he had cleaved and wholly devoted himſelfe for the guiding of his whole man in the duty which he owed and had been careſull to pay both to God and man.

Obſerve.

The word of God is the only rule of life.

And in this poynt the word or commandement of God is to be taken in a double oppoſition; firſt, to our own deviſes and rules; ſecondly, to the deviſes and rules of other men; man muſt not preſcribe to himſelfe, nor may we receive the preſcriptions of men to order our practiſe by. God is the only Law-giver, and we muſt receive the Law from his mouth. He that will pleaſe God, muſt ſhut all his own imaginations out of doores, and have nothing to doe with them; 'Tis not what man hath a minde to do, but what the minde of God is he ſhould doe, that pleaſeth him, or is either a worſhip or a ſervice acceptable to him. We never diſhonour God more then when we take upon us to ſerve him our own way, and leaving his rule make a rule for our ſelves. Such a ſerving of God is rebellion againſt him; as was told *Saul* by the Prophet (1 *Sam.* 15. 22.) *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings, and ſacrifices, as in obeying the voyce of the Lord. Saul* thought he had done very wel when he ſaved the ſheep and oxen for ſacrifice; But he was told, *that to obey is better then ſacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of Rams.* God had commanded burnt offerings,

offerings, and ſacrifice, but he had no delight in them when his owne voice was not obeyed, or when they were offered, either beſide or againſt his command (*Luke* 16. 15.) *That which is highly eſteemed among men, is an abomination to the Lord*: His thoughts are not our thoughts, either in the doing of what is good, or in the pardoning of what is ſinfull. As man is apt to thinke, that God will not pardon what he hath done ſinfully, ſo that he will accept of what he thinks he hath done holily, though he hath no rule for the doing of it, but what himſelfe hath deviſed. We alwayes faile in our meaſure, while we meaſure God by our ſelves. And it is as dangerous to take the rule of our actions from men, as not to take the rule of God. In this ſence we muſt call no man Maſter, nor may we be the ſervants of the wiſeſt men. And as we muſt not be *the ſervants of men*, becauſe (which is the Apoſtles reaſon, 1 *Cor.* 7. 23.) *We are bought with a price*; that is, dearely redeemed by Chriſt; ſo neither may we be the *ſervants of men*, in following their dictates, becauſe we have received a word from God, whom alone we ought to follow, and none elſe, but in ſubordination to or complyance with his word and the commandement of his lips, or as it followes in the concluſion of this verſe, *the words of his mouth.*

I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.

Job having given us two negatives, *I have not declined*, *I have not turned backe*, as proofs of his integrity and holines, now gives us an affirmative to make up the fulneſs of his proofe. *Not to doe evill is commendable, but to doe good is a higher commendation.* צפנתי *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth.* The Hebrew word ſignifies two things; firſt, to hide or conceale; ſecondly, to priſe, value, or eſteeme. Some render this Text by the former, not as we, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth*, but *I have hid or laid up the words of his mouth*, that's a good reading, and ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates; *More then my daily bread have I laid up the words of his mouth.* The Vulgar gives another reading, *In my boſome have I hid the words of his mouth*: in this following the Septuagint, who by the change of a letter in the Originall, tranſlate the word which we render, *More then my neceſſary or ſtatute food in my boſome*; But I paſſe that as a miſtake of the text in that word, yet in

In ſinu meo abſcondi verba oris ejus. Vulg. *Græcus ſecutus* חקקי *legit non* חקקי *at venit ad ſcriptum eſſet* בחקי *in ſinu meo abſcondi.* Merc.

in the former part it conſents with Mr. *Broughton*; *I have hid, or layd up the words of his mouth more then my daily bread.* And as this tranſlation holds out a truth in it ſelf, ſo the ſenſe meets with ours; for as the Originall word doth as properly ſignifie to hide, or lay up, as to eſteeme, ſo thoſe things are laid up or hidden by us which are of moſt eſteeme. And this action of hiding or laying up the word, is often ſpoken of in Scripture, both as the practice, and as the duty of the Saints. (*Pſal.* 119. 11.) *I have hid thy commandements in my heart.* And the rule is given by wiſdome (*Pro.* 2. 1.) *My ſonne, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandements with thee.* Wiſdome counſelleth us not only to receive, but to hide the commandements. And (*Pro.* 4. 20, 21.) Wiſdome goeth yet further; *My ſonne, attend to my words, incline thine eare to my ſayings, let them not depart from thine eyes, keepe them in the midſt of thy heart.* The heart (as Naturaliſts ſay) is in the midſt or center of the body. Holy truths muſt be kept in the midſt of the heart, in the midſt of the middle, that is, in the ſafeſt place, in that moſt retyred chamber, the midſt of the heart. But why ſhould theſe words be hidden in the heart, which are and ought to be proclaimed in the eare and upon the houſe-top? I anſwer; we hide things, firſt, that we may know where to have them, what is throwne at our heeles, we know not where to have. Secondly, We hide things for ſafety, or from danger as well as to have them ready at hand for uſe. There are enemies who watch their opportunity to ſteale the word away from us, & therefore, it is our wiſdome as well as our duty to hide it or lay it up ſafe. So that in both notiõs we ought to hid the word of God, firſt, that we may have it at hand for uſe: as it is ſaid of the Good houſe holder in the Goſpel, that he layeth up and hath in his treaſure, things both new and old. Secondly, that it may be kept out of the hand of the theiſe, who would rob us of that precious treaſure: Satan and the world, are *Word-ſtealers*, and they ſteale away the Word, not becauſe they deſire to make any uſe of it, but leaſt we ſhould therefore as *Gideon* (Judges 6. 11.) *threſhed wheat by the wine-preſſe to hide it from the Midianites*, ſo, ſeeing there are myſtical *Midianites*, who dayly ſteal away the Word (that moſt neceſſary and precious wheat) from thouſands who have heard and received it, we ſhould (in a holy jealouſie and ſuſpition of them) hide it out of their reach. In converſion God

purs

puts the Law in our minde, and writes it in our heart; And through that grace received and daily renewed, we alſo are enabled to lay it up there. A Good man (as one of the ancients ſpeaketh) *makes his heart Gods library, there he layeth up whole volumes of holy precepts, and of precious promiſes.* And looke what precepts or promiſes he finds in the Bible, or written book of the Word of God, the ſame he finds tranſcribed into his owne heart, and ſo into his life. But I will not inſiſt upon that reading, *I have laid up the words of his mouth, more then my neceſſary food.*

Pectus meum fecit Bibliothecam dei. Hieron. de Nepotiano.

We render, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth*, &c. Theſe two renderings of the word give light to each other. That which we eſteeme we hide, and the more we eſteeme a thing, the more carefully we hide it. No man will lay up that which is worth nothing; what we hide is of value, at leaſt we judge it to be ſo. Childrens pockets are often full of Bables, but to them they are no Bables; they eſteeme them as men doe gold and ſilver, elſe they would not take them up, much leſſe lay them up.

I have eſteemed the words of his mouth.

Before it was *the commandement of his lips*; ſome make a diſtinction between theſe, expounding *the commandement of his lips*, for the preceptive part of the word, and *the word of his mouth*, for the promiſſive part of the word, or for the promiſes, which are gracious declarations and manifeſtations of the love and good wil of God to ſinful man. As if *Job* in the former words had a reſpect chiefely to the Law, or rule of doing, and in this latter to the Goſpel or ground of beleeving. But though I ſee not well how theſe termes can beare that diſtinction, yet the matter doth, yea and ſeemes to require it; for though a godly man eſteems the precepts of God as well as the promiſes, and the commanders erts are the words of Gods mouth as wel as the promiſes; yet the promiſes are the moſt feeding, fatning, and refreſhing part of the word, & if ſo, ſurely they were not left out, yea poſſibly were principally intended by *Job* in this place, that he might ſhew how his Spirit was carried out to the full latitude and compaſſe of the mind of God, both in the Law and in the Goſpel. And becauſe the promiſes have ſo much ſoul-food in them, he doth therefore elegantly preferre them before his neceſſary food.

Diſta oris diſtinguo a præceptis, dictum oris eſt verbum gratioſæ nunciationis et promiſſionis, q. d *gratiam annunciatam libenièr accepi animi fide.* Coc:

I have eſteemed the word of his mouth.

But

But how much, or at what rate did he eſteeme them? it follows in the next words.

More then my neceſſary food.

There is yet ſome variety obſerveable in the reading of theſe latter words. Some give it thus; *I have eſteemed or hid the word of his mouth, according to my former manner, or as I was wont to doe:* As if he had ſaid; what I now profeſſe is no new thing with me, I have not taken up this eſtimation of the word now on the ſuddaine, upon my ſick bed, I have done ſo long before now, and ſo I doe ſtill. As it was ſaid of *Timothy, that from a child he had learned the Scripture.*

Again, Taking the ſame reading, the ſence may be given thus; *Upon election and deliberation, I eſteeme the word of his mouth*; As if he had ſaid, *I doe not eſteeme the word of God for nothing, or as not having conſidered it, and judged of the excellency of it, but upon long debate, conſultation, and tryall, I have pitch my election upon it.*

Further, Some in theſe words conceive *Job* alluding to thoſe things which men doe out of long cuſtome, or according to their ancient courſe of life, As if he had ſaid; There is nothing more fixed and ſetled either in my heart, or in my practiſe, then the Law of God; Obedience to it is now become to me as another nature. I ſlight in compariſon of that all humane Laws and Conſtitutions; as alſo my owne moſt practiſed formes and cuſtomes.

We render, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.* The Original word ſignifies *a ſtatute*, or *a law*, and ſo any thing which is eſtabliſhed or appointed for our uſe, as a law, or ſtatute is. And becauſe our food, our neceſſary food, is that which is cut out or appointed to us, either by God or man, therefore this word is applyed to ſignifie daily bread or neceſſary food. Banquets, and great feaſts, are without all meaſure, and bounds, they know no law, but are uſually full of exceſſe, both as to what is prepared, and to what is conſumed, 'tis ſeldome that either providers or eaters keep the rule in feaſting. But a due neceſſary food, which is for the maintaining of our lives, and the renewing of our ſtrength, to go on in our callings, this food hath a bound, and we eate (as it were) by meaſure, or by ſtatute, therefore we tranſlate *neceſſary food*, others *appointed food*, or a portion

A ſtatuto non abſcendi elogium ejus. Mont:

Ex ſtatuto meo vel more meo, ut ſibi meruiſſe non tacoaſſuerit præterea nihil, quod deinceps habeat i. e. pœna abſtinentiæ & deliberandi ſine ſatiandæ, non externe tantum et lentèr divinam legem cujus ſtare, ad ſe decreverit. Cajet.

Alii ſub ad actiones humanas conſuetas quas de more facit reſpuens ut antea habuerit lege domini animo recendere & ei operam dare quam ſolita & conſtituta ſibi ac uſitata fuere. Hiere.

Jobs proprie ſtatutum et decretum ſonat, & hinc certam & decretam cibi rationem. Quicquid adcirtum & veluti ſtatutâ menſurâ ad neceſſarium victum appellatur. Hiere.

portion. So the word is uſed (*Gen.* 47. 22.) *Onely the Land of the Prieſts bought he not, for the Prieſts had a portion aſſigned them of Pharoah, and they eate the portion which he gave them*; their aſſigned portion is expreſſed by this word; a portion it was to live upon; ſuch as Schollers have in Colledges, and Almes-men in Hoſpitalls by the Statute of their Founders. And in the book of the *Proverbs*, we have it twice uſed in ſuch a ſenſe (*Pro.* 30. 8) *Remove from me vanity, and lyes, give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me*, or *with my ſtatute bread*; that is, give me ſo much onely as the law of nature, or the law of my neceſſity and conveniency calls for, to fit me for duty; with this ſtatute bread let me be fed, let others have their full tables, this ſhall ſerve my turne. Againe (*Pro.* 31. 15.) *She ariſeth alſo while it is yet night* (ſpeaking of the good houſe-wife) *and ſhe giveth meat to her houſehold, and a portion to her maidens*; ſhe doth not throw the houſe out at windows, or make havock of all, as not caring which end went forward. And as ſhe is no prodigall waſter, ſo ſhe is neither niggardly nor ſcraping, neither pincing nor pinching, but giveth a meet portion to her maidens. So here, *I have eſteemed the word of thy mouth more then my neceſſary food.* This ſmall proportion of food greatens the ſenſe of the Text, and heightens *Jobs* holineſſe and piety very much: for when we come to full tables, when there is exceſſe, our ſtomacks loath the meat, and the more meat there is, the leſſe ſome are able to eat, becauſe the ſtomach is over-charged with the ſight of it. Appetite may be dulled with abundance: but when we finde onely a convenient, neceſſary ſtatute portion, as it were, ſo much as is needfull to ſatiſfie hunger, and give ſome moderate delight this pleaſeth moſt and is more eſteemed by temperate perſons then the greateſt feaſt in the world. A man doth not nautiate his neceſſary food, or loath what hunger craves; a cruſt of bread, and that which is courſe is pleaſant then; neceſſary food is the ſweeteſt food, and we are beſt ſatisfied with that which breeds no ſatiety. *We live moſt comfortably with that food, without which we cannot live at all comfortably.* So then, when *Job* ſaith here, *I eſteemed the word of his mouth more then my neceſſary food*, it is as if he had plainely ſaid, I took more care for, and had a higher eſteeme of the food of my ſoule; then for that food of my body, which neceſſity forceth every man to eſteem.

Hence

Hence note.

First, *That a godly man hath a high eſtimation of the word of God.*

First, He doth not only eſteem it, but he eſteems it as food.

Secondly, He eſteems it as neceſſary food.

Thirdly, He eſteems it more then neceſſary food.

Here are three ſteps, by which his eſtimation of the word of God is to be taken. *David* ſaith of a godly man (*Pſal.* 1. 2.) *His delight is in the Law of the Lord.* The word there uſed ſignifies both *will, and delight.* Some render it (*voluntas*) *will*, and others (*voluptas*) *delight.* We may take in both, his will and his delight is in the law of the Lord, or he delightfully wills it. Would you know where the delight & joy of a Godly man is; it is in the law of the Lord, there 'tis fixed, and no where elſe comparatively, but in the Lord of the Law. Theſe two are inſeparable, he that delights in the Law hath firſt delighted in the Lord, and he that delights in the Lord, cannot but delight in the Law. There are two metaphors uſed in Scripture, which ſhew the eſtimation and delight which Saints have in the law of God, or in the word of his mouth.

Firſt, As the word is compared *to food*; ſecondly, as the word is compared *to treaſure*: the word is often compared to food, and the moſt delicious food (*Pſalm.* 119. 103.) *How ſweete are thy words unto my taſte, yea ſweeter then honey to my mouth.* And (*Pſal.* 19. 10.) *They are ſweeter then the honey and the honey-combe*: He doth not meane the honey-combe barely, as the veſſel wherein the honey is kept, but by the honey-comb he means the honey that flows or drops immediately and (as I may ſay) naturally without any art, or preſſing out of the combe, which is eſteemed the pureſt honey; ſuch is the law of God to the ſpirituall palate of a Godly man. That feaſt (*Matth.* 22. 2. *Luke* 14. 16.) to which ſinners are invited, is onely the declaration of the word, and minde of God in the Goſpel. The word of Grace is the greateſt feaſt which God makes his people. Againe, the word is as often compared to treaſure: what the eſteeme, and deſire of man is to treaſure, I need not ſtay to tell you. *The Judgements of God* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 19. 10.) *are more to be deſired then Gold, yea then much fine gold.* And againe (*Pſal.* 119. 72. 127.) *The law of thy mouth is better to me then thouſands of Gold and ſilver.*

And

And (*ver.* 127.) when he ſaw how ſome made void the Law of God, he ſaith, *Therefore I love thy commandements above Gold, yea above fine Gold.* As if he had ſaid, becauſe I ſee ſome men eſteem and reckon thy law as if it were droſſe, and throw it up as void and antiquated, or taking the boldnes, as it were, to repeale and make it void, that they may ſet up their own lufts and vaine imaginations, becauſe I ſee both prophane and ſuperſtitious men, thus out of love with thy Law, therefore my love is more enflamed to it, *I love it above gold*, which leads the moſt of men away captives in the love of it: and I eſteeme it more then that which is moſt eſteemed by men, and gaines men moſt eſteem in this world, *Fine Gold*; yea as he ſaid (*Pſal.* 19.) *More then much fine Gold.*

Secondly, Obſerve.

A high and reverentiall eſteeme of the word of God, workes the heart and keeps it cloſe to the obedience of the word.

Job having ſaid before, *I have kept the commandements of his mouth, I have kept his wayes, and not declined, I have not gone back*; now comes to the ſpring of all this conſtancy in obedience, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth*, &c. Love is the ſpring of action, and eſteeme is the top of love; we love nothing which we do not eſteeme, and what we love much we thinke we can never eſteeme enough; And what we thus love and eſteeme, we ſtrive to keep cloſe unto. They that receive the truth, and doe not receive the love of it, quickly turne from it to believe a lye, yea God therefore ſends them *ſtrong deluſion to believe a lye, becauſe they received not the love of the truth.* As not to love the truth is a ſin, ſo it is punifhed with another ſin, the love of error. Though we have taken much truth into our underſtandings, yet unleſs we take it into our affections alſo, we cannot hold it long. 'Tis love which holds the heart and the word together. No man willingly obeyes that Law which he doth not love. Before *David* could ſay, *The Law is my meditation all the day*, he ſaith, *O how I love thy law* (Pſ. 119. 97.) The hypocrite, *who hates inſtruction, and caſts the word of God behinde his backe*: that is, ſlights and vilifies it to the utmoſt (for ſo much to caſt behinde the back imports, the hypocrite, I ſay, who thus caſts the word of God behinde his backe) will be talking of the word, and have it much in his mouth, yea he will mouth it ſo, or be ſo talkative about it, that God reproves or checks

checks him for it (*Pſal.* 50. 16.) *Unto the wicked ſaith God What haſt thou to doe to declare my ſtatutes, or that thou ſhouldeſt take my Covenant in thy mouth.* So then, the hypocrite was very buſie with his tongue, and he could ſpeak much of that which he loved never a whit. But was the hypocrite a man of his hands alſo? was he buſie in obeying the word which he had caſt behinde his back? The next words of the Pſalme (*ver.* 18, 19, 20, 21.) tells us what he was buſie about, even this, he was breaking the Law as faſt as he could; *When thou ſaweſt a thiefe, then thou conſenteſt with him, and haſt been partaker with Adulterers*, &c. The inditement is large, and upon many heads, yet all true, and is therefore cloſed with, *Theſe things haſt thou done* (ver. 21.) I the Lord am witnes, and ſo is thy owne Conſcience. That Scripture is a cleare glaſſe, wherein we may ſee how all they will uſe the Law of God, who doe not highly eſteeme the words of his mouth. We may read *Jobs* text backward for their character; *Their feete have not held his ſteps, his way have they not kept, but declined, they have gone back from the commandement of his lips.* And why ſo? *for they have eſteemed the words of his mouth no more then their un-neceſſary food, no more then the ſcraps that fall from their Table, no more then* (as the Proverb ſaith) *their old ſhoes. I have eſteemed the word of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.*

When *Job* ſaith, *I have eſteemed the word of his mouth*, &c. It is, as if he had ſaid, this is enough for me that God hath ſaid it, to make me eſteeme it.

Hence obſerve.

Thirdly, *Whatſoever God ſaith, is to be eſteemed for his own ſake, or becauſe he hath ſaid it.*

As God needs not borrow light from any what to ſpeake, ſo he needs not borrow teſtimony or Authority from any to ratifie what he hath ſpoken. *He is to be beleeved for himſelf.* His words need no further on, but (*ipſe dixit*) *I the Lord have ſaid it, or thus ſaith the Lord*; that is enough to ſilence all queryes and diſputes both about the truth of what is delivered, and the neceſſity of our obedience to it. As the word of Gods mouth is to be obeyed, ſo it is therefore to be obeyed, becauſe it is the word of his mouth. That he hath ſaid it muſt command our faith; As he is the true God, ſo he is the God of truth. Every word of his mouth is precious.

cious. As what God hath spoken must be the rule of our faith, so that he hath spoken must be the reason of our faith, *I have esteemed the words of his mouth*, &c.

Lastly, From both these verses, we may take notice of the severall steps, by which *Jobs* piety did arise to so eminent a height.

First, He strongly tooke hold of the steps of God.

Secondly, He diligently kept his way.

Thirdly, He declined not, either to the right hand, or to the left.

Fourthly, He went not back from the Holy commandements, both which negatives may be resolved into this affirmative, He walked very closely and exactly with God, in utmost perseverance.

Fifthly, He tooke a delightfull care about all those things, which the word of God called him unto, even beyond all the care which he took for those things which are most conducible to and necessary for the comforts of his body or naturall life.

JOB.

JOB, CHAP. 23. Vers. 13.

But he is in one mind, and who can turne him? and what his soule desireth, even that he doth.

IN this verse, *Job* is conceived by some, at once making discovery of his own infirmitie, and of the soveraignty of God; But though all agree that they carry a full discovery of the soveraignty of God, yet many are so farre from judging them a discovery of *Jobs* infirmitie, that they rather discover the strength and hight of his Grace and holines. To cleare the whole matter, we may take notice, That there are three apprehensions about the scope and sence of these words.

First, As if in them *Job* rendred a reason of what he spake in the verse immediately foregoing, here giving an account, why he had kept so close to God, and to his wayes: *My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined, neither have I gone back from the commandements of his lips*, &c. And why all this? *for he is of one minde.* That is, God will have his way, there's no resisting, his commandements must be observed; that which he once made a law, and rule for me to walke by, continueth so still: *He is of one mind.* Therefore I must keep close to his minde: it were a vaine thing, for me to turne any other way, when God holds the same way. It were folly for me to change my practice, when I find no change at all in his precepts: they being still one and the same in themselves, and having the same obligation upon me.

Secondly, These words may give an account, or a reason of his afflictions; As if he had thus expressed himselfe: *Though my conscience beareth me witnesse, that I have not gone in any such sinfull way, as ye taxe me with, nor defiled my selfe with such grosse iniquities, as usually draw down the visible Judgements of God upon men; Yet I finde God going on still to afflict me, he keeps his rod upon my backe, and his burden upon my shoulders, his terrors still incamp about me, and his arrowes drinke up my spirit. Nor will he be moved by any entreaty of mine to withdraw his hand from me, What ever pleaseth him, he will doe, how unpleasant soever it is to me.* And what's the reason of all this? *He is in one mind:* God is unalte-

unalterable, therefore doe not thinke, that becauſe he continueth theſe afflictions and burdens upon me, that therefore all muſt be reſolved into my ſin. No, we may reſolve all this into the ſoveraignty and unchangeableneſſe of God, he is in one mind, and he will doe what his minde is, and none ſhall turne him.

Thirdly, (which ſuites the former) That *Job* here ſhewes his friends, the true way of reconciling his owne innocency, with the ſharp afflictions and troubles which were upon him. *Job* felt and ſaw (and others either did or might) that he was ſorely afflicted, And *Job* knew (though others did not) that he was innocent, as to the charge brought againſt him. Then how ſhall he reconcile the juſtice of divine providence, with his owne innocence? His friends knew not how to reconcile, the innocency of an afflicted man, and the juſtice of an afflicting God. This was a riddle which they could not unfold. And therefore when they ſaw God thus afflicting him, they concluded as ſtrongly as if they had ſeene it, that *Job* had greatly offended God. But *Job* knew how to unlock this ſecret, and expound this riddle; He knew how to maintaine and aſſert his owne integrity while he ſuffered, and yet acquit the Juſtice of God in laying thoſe ſufferings upon him. He could ſay, *God is ſupreame*; *He is in one minde*: And what he doth, he may doe becauſe he hath a mind to doe it, He hath deep purpoſes and deſignes, which I am not able to reach or fathome: Therefore though I complaine, I doe not complaine as if God had done me wrong, but becauſe I ſmart, becauſe I feel ſuch paines, and ſo heavie a preſſure upon me. I am far from ſaying that he hath injured me, though he hath thus afflicted me; nor can any thing which he hath done or ſhall further do, be an injury to me, for I confeſſe that he hath a right to doe whatſoever he pleaſeth to doe. Thus we have an excellent defence made by *Job* in theſe words to vindicate the Lords ſharp dealings with him from the leaſt ſuſpition of injuſtice, and to accord the aſſertion of his owne afflicted innocence, with a beleeving reverence of the righteouſneſſe of God; and ſo theſe words of his are the breathings of a very gracious ſpirit: teaching us far better then his friends had done, how to anſwer for God in his ſaddeſt diſpenſations towards man. They knew no other way to doe it, but by rendering *Job* a notorious hypocrite, an haynous offender, and theſe his ſufferings to be the puniſhments of his hypocriſie and offences. But *Job* reſolves all into the un-

Ingenio ſuperbi tentat medicina promptum, sanatis egra verbis, ubi deſperat nitentia. Horat.

Iuſtificat Deum, et ſuam innocentiam aſſerit, ut Job illam cum iuſtitia divina conciliet. Ille immittit propter peccata ſua graves cruciatus, hic occultos ſed deo notos, Piſcat.

Iuſti de libertati dei de ſignatæ afflictiones, quas nullis peccatis. Cocc.

unchangeablenes of Gods will, and the ſoveraignty of his power. Thus much for the generall ſcope of theſe words.

Verſ. 13. *But he is of one minde.* וְהוּא בְאֶחָד

Theſe words undergoe variety of readings, I will name foure.

First, Some tranſlate thus; *For he is alone.* That is, he is the onely Judge, there is none above him, to whom I might appeale from him, nor hath he any equall to ballance him. There's none to be found upon the earth, no nor in heaven, that can alter and controule his decrees, or ſupercede and check any of his proceedings; *He is alone.*

Ipſe enim ſolus eſt. Vulg.

Ipſe unus eſt. Pagn.

Secondly, Others conceive there is a redundancy in the affix (*beth,*) in. And ſo inſtead of *He is in one*, the words are thus given, *He is one*; As if *Jobs* meaning were this, There is none *One but He*, or none *One as He*. As Chriſt ſaith, *There is none good but God*, or *there is but one good*, that is, *abſolutely good*; ſo there is none one but God, that is, *abſolutely One*, God is ſuperlatively one, *the one moſt-one.*

Alij ב redundare putant. Merc: *Cum nemo abſolutè ſit niſi deus & nemo ſit abſolute bonus niſi deus; ita nemo unus eſt niſi deus. Deus eſt uniſſonus.*

Thirdly, Thus; *But if he act againſt one, who can turne him?* And ſo Mr *Broughton*; *Yet when he is againſt me, who can ſtay him?* This hath a clear truth in it, and fully hits the ſcope of the place.

Sed ſi ipſe contra unum agit, quis revocet. Pisc. Jun. *Et ipſe in uno, Mont.*

But I conceive a fourth reading, (which leads to ours) to be yet more cleare, and that is, *He is in one, and who can turne him?* In one; what one? we anſwer, *in one mind*; noting the ſtability of the thoughts, and purpoſes of God, his minde is one, his purpoſe is one, his decree is one, he is alwayes like himſelf in all theſe. He doth not change his minde, as man doth; He is conſtant and fixed to his owne purpoſes, to the dictates of his owne will and wiſdome; *He is one.*

In unum, ſupple, homines, ipſe perſeverans in ſuis conſiliis eſt. e. non mutatur ut homo.

And who can turne him? וּמִי יְשִׁיבֶנּוּ

Or, *Who can turne him away?* Or, as another renders, *Who can make him returne backwards?* that is, who can make him go back from what he hath determined and once reſolved upon. True repentance or converſion is the change of the minde in man. Every man that is converted from his ſinfull ſtate & courſe by the power of God, becomes another man (as to his morals and ſpirituals)

Et quis averteret eum. Mont. *Et quis reddit ſecum ut retorſum.* Pagn. *i. e. ab inſtituto vel a ſuum ſententia.*

then he was before, but man cannot turn God, and make him any other then he is. God can cauſe man to change his minde; but man cannot make God change his minde, nor turn him backward. The Prophet ſaith of God (*Iſa.* 44. 25.) *That he turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledge fooliſh.* The turning of the wiſe backward, is the altering of their counſells. When they will not alter them, God can. He ſaith, Their councells ſhall not ſtand, nor ſhall they reach the end to which they were appointed. And it is ſo. But can the wiſeſt of men, or all wiſe men plotting and laying their heads together, turne the moſt wiſe God backward? They cannot. So that theſe words hold forth the efficacy and ſtability of the purpoſes, counſells, and decrees of God. *Who can turne him?*

Sed quid ego? ſimilis cum ſit ſibi ſemper & idem. Quis rationem ab eo facili diſſolve poſcat.

And what his ſoule deſireth, even that he doth.

God is not like man, conſiſting of a ſoule and body; Man is the reſult of ſoule and body united together. A ſoule is not a man, nor is a body a man, man is a third thing riſing out of both; But *God is a ſpirit.* And when Job ſaith, *What his ſoule deſireth*; The meaning is, what himſelfe deſireth. The ſoule of a man, is indeed the man, becauſe the choyceſt part of man: though man hath another part, namely, a body, yet *the ſoul is he.* The ſoule of man, being his beſt part, is often put for the whole man. But the ſoul of God is not put here for God, becauſe it is the beſt part of Him; *His ſoule is himſelfe.*

Animam alicujus ſumi pro eo cujus eſt anima res eſt nota, quare anima dei, deus eſt. Sanct.

Further, This phraſe or manner of ſpeaking, *what his ſoul deſireth*, notes onely the intenſnes and ſtrength of his deſires, or what he deſireth ſtrongly. The Lord ſometimes makes offers to doe that which is not in his heart or deſire to doe: But what ever his ſoule goes out upon indeed, or would have done, that ſhall be done. Thus the word is uſed frequently, to ſet forth the full purpoſe of God to doe a thing (*Levit.* 26. 30.) *And I will deſtroy your high places, and cut down your images, and caſt your carkaſes upon the carkaſes of your idols, and my ſoule ſhall abhorre you.* That is, extreamely abhorre you, I will abhorre you with the utmoſt abhorrence And againe (*Iſa.* 1. 14.) *Your new moones, and your appointed feaſts, my ſoule hateth.* That is, I hate them with a perfect hatred, to ſhew how deepe his hatred was of thoſe things (as done by them) he ſaith, *my ſoule hateth them*; As if he had ſaid, I hate

I hate your formality in my worſhip, from the bottome of my heart. We have the ſame ſence (*Jer.* 6. 8.) *Be thou inſtructed O Jeruſalem, leſt my ſoule depart from thee.* That is, leſt I totally depart. I will depart not only by withdrawing ſome of your outward comforts but even thoſe which are the more intimate and immediate diſcoveries of my love, *my ſoule ſhall depart from thee*, or, *be looſed, and diſ-joynted from thee* (as we put in the Margin) that is, I will be of no more uſe to thee, or a help to thee, then a member of the body is to the body, when it is diſlocated or removed from its proper joynt. Once more (*Jer.* 32. 41.) *I will rejoyce over them to do them good, and will plant them in this land aſſuredly, with my whole heart, and with my whole ſoule*; That is, I will do it for them entirely and affectionately, or with entireſt affection.

What his ſoule deſireth.

That is, *What he deſireth*, or whatſoever pleaſeth him; We deſire onely thoſe things which are very pleaſing, And thoſe things which are moſt pleaſing to us, are, to us, very deſireable. *The deſire of man is love in motion, as his joy is love at reſt.* But in God deſire and joy are not diſtinguiſhable, in him there is no motion, all is reſt. *What his ſoul deſireth,*

Velle eſt hic loco aliquid peculiarius expetere, concupiſcere, ſolet ad rem quã piam delectabilem referri.

Even that he doth.

The Hebrew is very coreiſe, *His ſoule deſireth, and doth.* That is, he no ſooner deſireth a thing, but he doth, or when he deſireth, it is done. *The will of God is execution*; though he willeth many things, which (as to man) are not preſently, no nor till a long time after executed, yet as to himſelfe whatſoever God willeth is executed, and whenſoever he pleaſeth, his will is actually executed among men. *He deſireth, and it is done.*

Optat tantam & protinus factum eſt. Merc.

From the words thus opened, we may obſerve according to the firſt reading of the former part of the verſe. That.

God is one.

There is one God, and but one. Thus the Lord ſpeaks of himſelfe by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 44. 8.) *Is there a God beſides me? Yea there is no God. I know not any.* (Iſa. 45. 5.) *I am the Lord, and there is none elſe, there is no God beſides me.* He is one himſelfe, and

he hath not a ſecond. The heathens having many gods, when they were oppreſſed by any one god, they ſought reliefe from another. As Sorcerers and Witches goe to a ſtronger ſpirit, for help againſt what a weaker ſpirit hath done. Heathen gods were devill gods, and they are many. The *Jewes* degenerating into Idolatry, multiplyed their Gods according to the number of their Cities (*Jer.* 2. 28.) But *Jehovah, The living God, The Word, is one God.* We affirme from Scripture that there are three Hees or ſubſiſtences in the God-head (commonly called perſons) Father, Sonne, and Spirit; but theſe three are *one*, not only by conſent, but by nature and eſſence. *Heare O Iſrael* (ſaid *Moſes*, Deut. 6. 4.) *The Lord our God is one Lord.*

Sæpe premente deo fert deus alter opem.

Secondly, From our reading; *He is in one*, or (as we ſupply) *He is in one minde.* Obſerve that great truth.

God is unchangeable.

I the Lord change not (Mal. 3. 6.) The unchangeableneſſe of God may be conſidered in divers things.

Firſt, In his eſſence or nature; God knoweth no decay. He is a ſpirit, an eternall ſpirit; He hath nothing mingled or mixed in him which ſhould worke or tend to alteration. God is ſimple, He is moſt ſimple, even ſimplicity it ſelfe. There is no compoſition in him, no diverſitie of qualities in him. Man changeth in his naturall conſtitution, becauſe compounded and made up of different elements, qualities, and humours, which contending and fighting one with another, neceſſitate his change. Every day brings ſome, though inſenſible, changes upon us; And in a few yeares our changes are very viſible, and ſenſible. The Pſalmiſt ſpeaking of the heavens, which of all viſible creatures are in nature moſt unchangeable, yet calls them changeable in compariſon of God (*Pſal.* 102. 26.) *The heavens are the work of thy hands; They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea all of them ſhall wax old like a garment; as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed.* The heavens are the pureſt part of the creation, and freeſt from elementary mixtures, yet they ſhall wax old, they ſhall be changed. In oppoſition to which the Pſalmiſt adds (*ver.* 27.) *But thou art the ſame, and thy yeares ſhall have no end.* Nor are the yeares of God onely without end, but himſelfe is without change. Indeed there is no change of time to God; paſt, preſent, and to come,

come, are all the ſame to him, and he is the ſame in all; *Thou art the ſame*, or more emphatically according to the ſtrictnes of the Hebrew phraſe, *Thou art thy ſelfe, allwayes thy ſelfe.* As thou art thou waſt, and as thou art and waſt thou wilt be for ever. When *Moſes* deſired to know the name of God, (*Exod.* 3. 13.) we finde it at the 14. verſe; and God ſaid unto *Moſes*, *I am That I am; And he ſaid, thus ſhalt thou ſay to the children of Iſrael, I AM hath ſent me unto you.*

Secondly, As God is unchangeable in his eſſence, ſo in all his divine perfections and attributes; all which are eſſentiall unto him. God is as powerfull and ſtrong as ever he was (*Iſa.* 26. 4. *Iſa.* 59. 1. As high and ſoveraigne as ever he was, *Pſal* 92. 8. as wiſe and omniſcient as ever he was, 1 *Tim.* 1. 17.) As gracious and mercifull as ever he was, *his mercy endureth for ever.* (Pſ. 100. 5.) As faithfull and true as ever he was (*Rom.* 3. 3, 4.) And as juſt and righteous as ever he was, he doth and will reward every man according to his works.

Thirdly, God is unchangeable in his purpoſes, decrees, and counſells. The *Medes* and *Perſians* boaſted of their decrees, that they altered not (*Dan.* 6. 18.) But the very unalterableneſs of humane Decrees is alteration it ſelf compared with the unalterablenes of divine decrees. We have the Lord thus ſpeaking in the Prophet (*Iſai.* 46. 16.) *I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, ſaying my counſell ſhall ſtand, and I will doe all my pleaſure.* And as the Lord eſtabliſheth his own counſel, ſo he can unſetle the beſt laid counſells of the ſons of men (*Pſ.* 33. 10, 11.) *The Lord bringeth the counſel of the Heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect: The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* And hence the Lord, by his Prophet, challengeth the deepeſt politicians, the Oracles for counſel, the *Achitophels* of this world to ſtraine their wits to the utmoſt, for ſecuring of their own counſels from diſappointment (*Iſa.* 8. 10.) *Gird your ſelves, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces, take counſel together, and it ſhall come to nought; ſpeake the word, and it ſhall not ſtand, for God is with us;* he is with us as to protect us againſt your open oppoſition, ſo to blaſt your moſt ſecret conſultations againſt us And as the Lords counſels are immutable in themſelves, ſo he hath condeſcended to aſſure us of their

their immutability (*Heb.* 6. 17, 18.) *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have ſtrong conſolation*, &c. Oaths are ſacred and the ſtrongeſt confirmations between man and man, and therefore though the counſel of God be immutable without an oath, yet that we might have the greateſt aſſurance that it is ſo, God hath confirmed it by an oath. That ſo the heires of ſalvation having two immutable things to reſt their ſoules and build their faith upon, might not onely have conſolation, ſtrong conſolation; ſuch conſolation as might maſter and overcome all the feare and unbeliefe of their owne hearts, and the gaineſayings of Satan.

Fourthly, God is alſo unchangeable in his promiſes; what ever he hath ſaid he will doe for his people, (*He is in one minde*) it ſhall be done. A promiſe from God is the beſt ſecurity: halfe a promiſe, an *it maybe* (as he ſpeakes to *the meeke of the earth* (Zeph. 2. 3) *Seeke righteouſnes, ſeeke meekenes, it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of the Lords anger*: this halfe promiſe (I ſay) is better ſecurity then the hand or ſeale, yea then the oath of the faithfulleſt man on earth (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) *All the promiſes of God in him* (that is, in Chriſt) *are yea and in him amen*; That is, they ſhall certainly be performed & accompliſhed. God doth not give promiſes (as many men doe) to raiſe and then diſappoint and abuſe our Hopes, He doth not make promiſes rather for ſnares to catch others, then for bonds to tie himſelfe, as ſome men doe, (which is not only a great unworthines, and diſingenuity in them, but a great iniquity and ſin) the Lords promiſes are our richeſt inheritances; and that not only becauſe he hath promiſed greater and better things then are in the compaſſe of any mans power to make good, or in the compaſs of any mans underſtanding to make but becauſe he will certainly be as good to us in performance as he hath been in promiſe. For *He is in one mind* concerning all that he hath promiſed. He will be mercifull as he hath promiſed, and pardon ſin as he hath promiſed, He will deliver us from trouble as he hath promiſed, and ſanctifie all our troubles to us, as he hath promiſed. He will give us his Spirit, as he hath promiſed, and ſave us eternally, as he hath promiſed.

Fifthly, He is alſo in one minde, concerning his threatnings. He will be as good as his word in the evill which he hath ſpoken againſt ſinners, as well as in the good which he hath ſpoken concerning his ſervants (*Zech.* 1. 5.) *Your fathers where are they? and the Prophets doe they live for ever? But my words and my ſtatutes, which I commanded my ſervants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? And they returned & ſaid, like as the Lord of hoſts thought to doe unto us, according to our wayes, and according to our doings, ſo hath he dealt with us.* That is, his threatnings have arreſted us as Sergeants do a malefactor, or a debtor, and carryed us away their priſoners. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Your fathers are dead, and my Prophets are dead alſo*, but the words which my Prophets ſpake to your fathers concerning the ſword, famine, & captivity which ſhould ſhortly come upon them, theſe dreadful propheſies dyed not, yea theſe are not yet dead but alive and in force againſt you. *If we do not take hold of the preceptive part of the Law by obedience, the pœnal part of the Law will take hold of us for our diſobedience.* Thus the Lord profeſſeth (*Mal.* 3. 5.) *And I will come neare to you to Judgement, and I will be a ſwift witnes againſt the ſorcerers, and againſt the adulterers, and againſt falſe ſwearers, and againſt thoſe that oppreſſe the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherleſſe, and that turne aſide the ſtranger from his right, and feare not me ſaith the Lord of hoſts, for I am the Lord, I change not.* I will certainely be not onely a *Judge* but a *witneſſe*, and that a *ſwift one*, againſt ſuch wicked ones. There is no evading my Judgement, ſeeing I am both witneſſe and Judge; as a witneſſe I know all that ye have done, and as a Judge I have power not only to condemne you, but alſo to give you up into the hand of the executioner; for *I am the Lord of Hoſts*; I have all the Armyes of heaven and earth at my command and bidding. Thus I will do, and be ye aſſared of it, that I will do ſo *for I am the Lord, I change not.*

Sixthly, God is unchangeable, or of one mind in his gifts. (*Rom.* 11. 29.) *The gifts, and calling of God are without repentance*; That is, The gifts of his effectuall calling ſhall never be repented of; As they who receive them, will have no cauſe to repent (yea they will have cauſe to rejoyce in them for ever) ſo God who gives them will not repent. *He is in one minde*, he will not alter his gifts. As *Pilate* when he was moved to alter his writing upon the Croſſe of Chriſt, anſwered, *What I have written I have written;*

written; that is, what I have written shall stand; so what motion soever should be made to God to recall the gifts of effectuall calling, he would surely answer, *What I have given I have given, my gift shall stand.* There are gifts of a meere outward calling, which God takes away againe. His gifts doe not stand with such, because they stand still with his gifts. That was the doom of the idle servant who had one talent given him; *Take the talent from him, and give it to him that hath ten Talents* (Matth. 25. 15. 28.) But the gift of effectuall calling shall not be taken away. (*Jam.* 1. 17.) *Every good gift, and every perfect gift* (such is the gift of effectuall calling) *is from above, and cometh downe from the father of lights, with whom is no variablenes, nor shadow of turning.* And as there is no variablenes in God, as to the matter or general nature of the gifts which he bestoweth (they are all good and perfect gifts in their kind, though they are not all in the same degree of goodnes and perfection; God doth not give his people, sometimes bread, and sometime a stone, now an egg and anon a scorpion, now, I say, as there is no variablenes in God, as to the nature of the gifts which he bestoweth) so there is no variablenes in him as to the act of giving or bestowing. As the Lord *giveth liberally, and upbraydeth not* (Jam. 1. 5.) so he giveth liberally and repenteth not. Thus we see he is not onely *one, but in one minde*; He is unchangeable; And that not onely in his essence and glorious attributes or perfections, but in his counsells, and decrees, in his promises, and threatnings, in his gifts and bounties to all his people; He giveth and repenteth not.

Before I passe from this poynt, it will be needfull to answer some Objections which are raised against it from those Scriptures which seeme to say, that *God is not of one minde*, or that his mind doth alter and change.

First, That report which *Moses* makes of God seems to say so, (*Gen.* 6. 6.) *And it repented the Lord, that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart:* What is repentance, but the change of the mind? therefore he that repents is not in one mind. Seeing then God repents, how is he unchangeably in one mind? A like appearance of contradiction, we find (1 *Sam.* 15.) not onely with this text in *Job*, but between the 11. verse compared with the 29. of the same Chapter. The 11. verse speakes thus; *Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, it repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be King,* &c. (*ver.* 29.) *And also the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent.* The strength or victory of *Israel*, is God, for it was by his strength that *Israel* had all his victories; and of him *Samuel* saith, *He will not repent*, when as himselfe had said a little before, *It repenteth me*, &c. To these Scriptures we may adde, 2 *Kings* 20. which in words holds out a great change in the minde of God concerning *Hezekiah*, if we compare the first and the fift verses of that Chapter together (*ver.* 1.) *In those dayes Hezekiah was sick unto death, and the Prophet Isaiah, the son of Amos, came to him and said unto him, thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order, for thou shalt dye & not live.* Here is a strong affirmation that *Hezekiah* should dye; And to the affirmative the negative is also added; *Thou shalt dye, and not live.* 'Tis the strongest manner of asserting any thing, when the contrary is denyed. As it is said of *John* the Baptist (*John* 1. 20.) *And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ*, &c. So here, *Thou shalt die, and not live.* Yet we read (*vers.* 5.) *And it came to passe before Isaiah was gone out of the middle Court, that the word of the Lord came to him saying, Turne againe, and tell Hezekiah the Captaine of my people, thus saith the Lord the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayers, I have seene thy teares: behold I will heale thee; on the third day thou shalt goe up into the house of the Lord, and I will adde unto thy dayes fifteene yeares.* Doth not this import an evident change in the minde of God? Having dispatcht the Prophet to tell *Hezekiah*, that he shall die, and not live, He presently after, even before he was got out of the Court, sends the same Prophet backe to tell him that he shall live, and not die. We have the same difficulty in that known place in the Prophesie of *Jonah* (*Chap.* 3. 4.) *Jonah* is sent to *Nineveh* with a direct message; *Yet fortie dayes and Nineveh shall be overthrown.* Notwithstanding as soon as the fast was proclaimed and kept, and the *Ninivites* had repented and turned from their evil wayes, *The Lord also repented of the evil denounced against them*; (ver. 10.) *And God saw their workes, that they turned from their evill way, and God repented of the evil that he had said, that he would doe unto them, and he did it not.* Here God repented of his threatning. He had said *Nineveh* should be over-thrown, yet when they turned from what they had done, God turned from what he said he would

do. And did he not change his mind, in reference to his promise to *Sion*, as there in reference to his threatning against *Nineveh*. The promise to *Sion* runs in this tenour; *This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it* (Ps. 132. 14.) Yet the Lord removed out of *Sion*, he departed from *Jerusalem*, and gave it into the enemies hands How many miseries, and captivities did that people undergoe, long agoe? and how are they scattered from *Jerusalem* into all Lands unto this very day? How then shall we reconcile the Text, and poynt in hand, with these quoted Scriptures, and many others of a like interpretation?

How is God unchangeable, or, *in one mind*, when we read of his repenting what he had done, of his saying what he would do, and yet not doing what he had said, both in his promises and in his threatnings How can these changes and the Lords unchangeablenes stand together? or how is he but *in one mind*, the tenour of whose doings doth so often vary, both from what he hath formerly done, and from what he hath professed he would doe. In a word, How is the Lord constant to what he saith he will do, when either he doth it not, or doth the quite contrary to it? He that repenteth is not in one mind, seeing repentance is a change of the minde.

First, I answer, Repentance properly taken notes a change of the mind; But in an improper or allusive sence, there may be repentance without any the least change of the mind. When God is said to repent (as in those texts alledged) we are to understand it improperly, or only in allusion unto man. The Scripture in many other things speakes of God, either as condescending to mans understanding, or as alluding to the common actions of man. God doth not act as man doth, yet by such expressions as hold out, what and how man acts, we may come the more easily to understand what God doth. As in the present instance, when man repents, he doth these two things.

First, He ceaseth to doe, what he began to doe, he breaks the thread of his former motions.

Secondly, When man repents that he hath done, or made such a thing he is ready to deface & destroy that which he hath made or done: When man repents that he hath set up such or such a thing, he removes and takes it downe. Thus God is said to repent, not because his mind is changed, but because (as a man that repenteth) he ceaseth to doe what he did, or he destroyeth that which he had made. Thus the Lord is said to repent his making of *Saul* king, because he meant to remove him from being king; And to repent that he had made the world, because his purpose was, for the sin of man to deface and destroy the present beautie and excellency of the world which he had made. God often puts forth the effects of repentance toward man, but the repentance of a man never put forth any effect upon God.

Secondly, We may answer thus; *God often minds a change: But he never changes his minde.* And so all those Scriptures before mentioned, note only that God did mind a change, or make a change: But not that he did change his minde. There is a vast difference between these two, to minde or determine a change, and to change the minde or determination. As for instance, a man that is resolved to weare garments sutable to the season of the yeare, and temperature of the weather; in the heate of summer it is his minde to weare light and thinne garments that he may be coole, and in the cold of winter, his mind is to weare heavier and thicker garments that he may be warme. Now if this man when winter comes leaves off his light thin garments & puts on those that are heavier & thicker, he cannot be said to change his mind, for his minde was alwayes to weare change of garments according to the season of the yeare and temper of the weather. And thus the Lord according to the changes which he finds among men for the better or for the worse, doth both minde and make eminent changes among them, as to his providentiall administrations, whether in wayes of Judgement or of mercy, but in these he never changes his own mind, forasmuch as his mind was everlastingly fixed, in case of such emergencies, to make those changes in his administrations and dealings with the sons of men.

Aliud est mutare voluntatem, aliud velle mutationem. Aquin. part. 1. q. 19. art. 7.

Thirdly, For further answer, We are to distinguish betweene the outward sentence, and declaration of God, and his secret purpose or decree. God doth often change his sentence, or the declaration: But he never changeth his purpose, decree, or counsell.

Quest. But is not that externall declaration, the mind of God also?

Answ. I answer: These denounced sentences or declarations are the mind of God, yet they are not the same with the counsels and purposes of God, but serve for the fulfilling and bringing

of them about; for by the change which the sentence revealed worketh in man, the counsel of God not revealed is effected. The frustrating the one, fulfills the other; And the Lords designe in such declarations of his minde, is to bring about or accomplish his purposes and counsells. God did purposely declare or pronounce a sentence of death against *Hezekiah* by the Prophet *Isaiah*, to the intent that his counsell concerning the continuance of *Hezekiahs* life might be fulfilled. And he sent the Prophet *Jonah*, to publish a sentence of utter destruction against *Nineveh*, purposely that his counsel concerning the preservation of *Nineveh* might be accomplished. The Lords counsel & purpose was that *Hezekiah* should live, and recover out of that disease. But how did he fulfill this? even by sending him a message of death, which caused him to weepe sore, and pray and cry earnestly to the Lord for life. *Thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying* &c. But then it may be questioned, was that word of the Lord true which he sent to *Hezekiah* by the Prophet, saying, *thou shalt dye*. The sentence published was true, and would certainly have come to passe according to the order and working of second causes, for looking to them, *Hezekiah* must die, his sicknes was unto death; *In those dayes was Hezekiah sicke unto death*. Doubtlesse his Phisitians and all that were about him gave him over for a dead man. Only God could restore him, and the way wherein he would restore him was by prayer. So for *Nineveh*, if we consider the desert of their sin, the sentence was true. *Nineveh* shall be destroyed. But the Lord sent his Prophet to tell them of their approaching destruction, that they might fast and turne from their evill wayes, and so his purpose for their preservation might be accomplished. Thus the outward sentence is changed, but the mind of God is not changed. And these changeable sentences were decreed by God, to bring about his unchangeable decree.

Fourthly, I answer; When God is said to repent, the change is not in God, but in us, God is alwayes the same, but we are not. God is so much the same, that he never alters, and man is so little the same, that he is alwayes altering; &, when he hath done evill, it is good for him that he is so. God did not change, but *Nineveh* changed by turning from sin, and *Hezekiah* changed by improving more in prayer, and therefore he dyed not at that time, nor

nor were they then destroyed. The change is in the creature, not in God, when that is changed which God speakes concerning the creature. He is still unmoveable in the same minde; all the motion is in the minde of man. It is in this case as with a ship putting out to Sea. When a ship sets out from the harbour, and sayles by the shore, the unexperienced passenger thinks the shore moves from the ship, whereas indeed the ship onely moves from or by the shore. So when we think God changeth, or is moved, the change or motion is onely in our selves. In one dispensation we take notice of the love of God, and in another of his wrath, in a third of his justice, and in a fourth of his mercy. These are changes upon us, but not in God. And these shew that God changeth his course towards us, but they are no proofes of a change in God. For the love of God, and the wrath of God, the justice of God, and the mercy of God are still the same, but we changing are cast sometime under the effects of his love, and sometimes of his wrath, we are sometimes under the saddest droppings of his justice, and sometimes under the sweetest influences of his mercy. As when a man changeth his aspect, and turnes about his body to another poynt, That part of the heaven which was before at his right hand, is now at his left; yet the heavens are as they were, they doe not change either their position, or their motion, but the man hath changed his. Thus the wrath, and love, the Justice, and the mercy of God stand alwayes at the same point; but man turneth sometimes *Justice-ward*, and sometimes *mercy-ward*; now he faces the wrath, and anon the love of God. And doing so, he meets with many changes in the dispensations of God toward him, but there is no change in the minde of God toward him.

And seeing God is unchangeable, or, *in one mind*, take this by way of deduction from it.

'Tis the duty of man to submit himselfe unto and acquiesce in the mind of God.

Seeing the minde of God rests, we ought to rest in the minde of God; that is, we ought to resigne up our selves, and to resolve our mindes into the minde, and our wills into the will of God. What ever pleaseth God, should please us. He is in one minde, and that one minde of his hath nothing in it but justice, and righteousnesse toward all, nothing but goodnesse, and mercy, nothing but loving kindnesse, and

and faithfulneſſe toward his peculiar people. As the mind of God revealed in his word, ſhould be the *rule of our actions*, ſo the mind of God revealed by his workes, ſhould be the reſt or *eaſe of all our paſſions*. The minde of God is that by which we are to guide our ſelves in all we doe, and to that we muſt yeeld in all we ſuffer. While we ſee ſome ſorely diſcompoſed in their ſpirits, yea vext beyond all reaſon at the diſpenſations of God, have we not reaſon to believe, that they have never heard, or at leaſt not well learnt and digeſted this great truth, *That God is in one mind.* When the minde of God is done, himſelfe is pleaſed, and ſhould not whatſoever pleaſeth God, pleaſe us alſo, yea though it be in it ſelfe, bitter and unpleaſant to us? A gracious heart taſts ſweetneſſe in Gall and Wormewood, conſidered under this notion, as it is the will and minde of God he ſhould drinke it, or feede upon it. It was a ſtrange power that *David* had over the people of *Iſrael*, or it ſhews that they had a very ſtrong opinion of his juſtice and integrity, when it is ſaid (2 *Sam.* 3. 36) *Whatſoever the King did, pleaſed all the people.* What was ſaid of him, we ſhould ſay in the higheſt ſence of God, whatſoever he doth ſhould be pleaſing to all his people. It was once the ſaying of a Court flatterer; *That which pleaſeth the King, pleaſeth me.* We cannot flatter God in ſaying ſo. It is but our duty to ſay ſo; we ſin if we ſay not, and ſay not with our hearts, *Whatſoever pleaſeth God, pleaſeth us.* He acts below both the duty and priviledge of a man, who reſolves himſelfe into the will of any man, how high ſoever, or though he be *King High*, and he acts above both the ſtate and proportion of a man (though much below the duty of a Chriſtian) who doth not reſolve himſelf into the will of the moſt high God, who is higher then the higheſt of the Kings of the earth. *He vainely ſuppoſeth himſelfe God-High, who ſubmits not to the will of the moſt High God.* Whatſoever God doth or will have done, man ſhould ſay, *Even ſo be it, as God will have it.*

Placet mihi quod regi placet; dixit Harpalus. Apud Herod. lib. 8.

But ſome may ſay, if it be ſo, then it ſeems we may not endeavour to extricate our ſelves from, or to get a removall of any of thoſe evills, troubles, or afflictions, which at any time preſſe and grieve us.

For anſwer to this ſcruple, I ſay.

Firſt, It is our duty in every trouble that God layeth upon us, to ſeeke unto God, and to uſe all good meanes for the taking of it off from us. But Secondly,

Secondly, We muſt not ſeeke unto God for the removing of any evill from us, as being diſpleaſed with his laying it upon us: we muſt be quiet under our troubles, and yet we may both deſire and endeavour to be quit of them. Though God be *in one mind*, yet that doth not neceſſitate man to one condition, nor hinder him from ſeeking a better then that wherein he is.

I have inſiſted the longer upon this point, becauſe *Job* gives it as a general anſwer to all his friends queries about him, and as the beſt expedient for reconciling the difference between them and him. *He is in one minde,*

And who can turne him?

Hence learne.

That as God is unchangeable in himſelfe, ſo none can alter or change him.

Some men are of a very ſteady ſpirit, they are not in and out, as we ſay, forward and backward: let them alone, and they are true to their own principles, and they will be true to others according to their promiſes. Yet, poſſibly, theſe men may be turned aſide, and led out of the way, by the perſwaſion of others. A ſubtle head and a ſmooth oyly tongue, may worke them off from their own reſolutions. It hath been a queſtion diſputed among moral Philoſophers, *Whether a wiſe man may be an uncertain or a various man*; And they reſolve it Negatively: Wiſdome is as balaſt, which keeps the minde from floating. And it hath been ſaid of a wiſe man among the Heathen, that the Sun might as ſoon be thruſt out of his line, as he from the line of Juſtice; yet let no man glory in man, no not in wiſe men. The wiſeſt, and moſt conſtant among men may doe unwiſely and prove unconſtant. The moſt reſolved among the children of men, may be wrought upon, and brought over to what they purpoſed not. But this is the glory of God, that as he is in one minde, ſo none *can turne him*, or make him in two. None can turne him out of the way, either of his intended Judgements, or promiſed mercies; what he hath a mind to doe, he will not be put by the doing it.

We may affirme three things concerning the works of God, or concerning God in his workings.

Firſt, The works of God are ſo full of myſtery, that none can fully

fully comprehend them; there is much in his ordinary works beyond man, and his extraordinary works are all beyond man. We (by reaſon of our indiligence) ſee but little of any of his workes, and ſome of his workes are ſuch, as we can ſee but a little way into them with all our diligence.

Secondly, The works of God are ſo full of righteouſneſſe, that no man can juſtly reprove, or finde fault with them. They who come with the moſt curious & critical eyes to examine the works of God, ſhall not finde any flaw or defect in them. There have been many, who (through their preſumptuous folly) have found fault with the workes of God, but there was never any (who with his moſt refined wit) could finde a fault in them. The *Jewes* of old complained of, and quarrel'd at the wayes of God as unequal (*Ezek.* 18. 25.) but when it came to tryall, they could prove nothing but the inequality of their owne.

Thirdly, The workes of God are ſo full of power, that *none can put a ſtop to*, or hinder the accompliſhment of them. Theſe are three excellent perfections of the workes of God; And the laſt is that which is here under hand. *Hezekiah* though a great King, was not able to bring a worke about which he had a minde to, The reſcue of *Jeruſalem* out of the hand of the *Aſſyrians*, and therefore he ſends this pitifull cry to the Prophet *Iſaiah* (2 Kings 19. 3.) *The children are come to the birth* (that is, the buſineſſe is ripe for execution) *and there is no ſtrength to bring forth.* The workes of the ſtrongeſt men may ſticke in the birth for want of ſtrength to bring them forth. But the workes of God never ſticke in the birth upon that or any other account. *He is in one minde, and who can turne him?* There are foure wayes by which men are uſually turned off from or ſtopped in their workes, but by none of them will God be turned, when he hath a minde to worke.

Firſt, Men are often ſtopt by outward power; they doe not either that good or that evill which they would, becauſe they cannot, and their *cannot*, poſſibly, doth not lie in this, that they have not a power in themſelves proportionable to the worke, or becauſe they have medled with a matter too great for them, and for which they are no match; but they therefore only *cannot* do what they would, becauſe they are hindred from doing it. A man may have ability to maſter the worke he is about to doe, yet not to

to maſter the impediments that ſtand in the way of it. But all the power of the creature cannot hinder God; *If he will work, none can let him* (Iſa. 43. 13.) *The power of men is weakneſſe unto God.* And that which looks like weakneſſe in God, is ſtronger then the united ſtrength of all men (1 *Cor.* 1.25.) *The foolishneſſe of God, is wiſer then men; and the weakneſſe of God, is ſtronger then men.*

Secondly, Men are, or may be turned by counſell or advice: and ſome who could not be ſtopt by power, have yet been ſtopt by perſwaſion. An eloquent tongue hath prevailed, where a violent hand could not. We read how *Abigail* prevailed upon *David* a mighty warrier, and mightily reſolved to deſtroy *Nabal*, and all his houſe (1 *Sam.* 25. 22.) *So and more alſo doe God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light, any that piſſeth againſt the wall.* *David* ſpake not onely peremptorily, but with a kinde of adjuration; And he was upon his march with foure hundred armed men at his heeles to put his purpoſe into Execution; Yet a diſcreet woman goes out to meet and turne him from his courſe, and turne him ſhe did; ſhe did it effectually. But what could *Abigail* a woman doe, to prevaile with *David* and his Souldiers? What ſhe did, ſhe did by perſwaſion, ſhe laid arguments before him, and managed them with ſo much pathetical rhetoricke, and clearnes, that he could not withſtand her (*ver.* 32, 33.) *And David ſaid unto Abigail, Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, which ſent thee this day to meete me; and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſſed be thou which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed blood, and to avenge my ſelfe with mine owne hand.* Thus men may be turned from what they have reſolved, eſpecially when they doe not well deliberate before they reſolve. But God cannot be turned by any counſel or advice, ſeeing whatſoever he purpoſeth to do, he doth it upon the unerring advice and counſell of his owne will. Thoſe paſſions of anger and jealouſie, in which (as he is ſet forth to us in Scripture) God is ſaid to act, are yet the iſſues of infinite deliberation. *He that doth all things by the beſt counſel, can never be turned by any.*

Thirdly, Men are often turned by petition, when they will not by argument, and you may entreate them to deſiſt from what they were about to doe, though you cannot adviſe them out of it. And we know that of all things prayer is the moſt prevailing with God. Nothing hath ever turned God ſo much as prayer

hath; and yet prayer it selfe (in the sence here intended) cannot turne God. We must not thinke that we change God by our prayers, though when we pray, God often makes a gracious change for us. Whatsoever his minde is to doe, he doth it, yea though prayer stand in his way. We may say that the greatest providentiall changes that were ever made in the world, God hath made them upon the prayers of his people; yet he never changed his owne minde in the least at the prayer of his people. The Lord calls his people earnestly to call upon him so, and meeting him by prayer to stop him when he is preparing to doe some great thing against them, or to bring some great evill upon them. (*Amos* 4. 12.) *Therefore thus will I doe unto thee O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God O Israel.* We may take those words *prepare to meete thy God O Israel*, not so much for a challenge as for a direction. But how shall *Israel prepare to meet God*? Not with weapons of warre, not with sword, and speare, these will make no defence against God. No: but with teares and prayers, these are the armes and amunition of a Saint, there's no contending with God, but onely by humbling our selves before him.

But you say, prayer cannot turne God.

I answer; prayer hath caused and may cause God to turne from his outward actings and dispensations, only, it cannot turn God from any of his counsels or resolutions. And because prayer hath so great a power upon God, to turne him from his outward dispensations, therefore he sometimes hath forbidden prayer, when he was resolved not to turne from such threatned dispensations (*Jer.* 14. 11.) *Then said the Lord unto me, pray not for this people for their good.* As if the Lord had said; if any thing could prevaile with me, thy prayer would; But because I am fully purposed to visit their iniquities, therefore I will not have thy prayers run waste. As for them let them pray as long as they will, as their prayers come, onely from their necessities, not from their hearts, so they shall not come neere mine; nor doe I care how long their prayers (which are but pudle water) run waste; let them pray and spare not, but let them be sure of this, that though they pray I will not spare; so it follows (*ver.* 12.) *When they fast I will not hear their cry, and when they offer burnt offering, and an oblation, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword,*

sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence. Their own prayers had no power in them to turne God; and he who had a power to stop God by prayer, is himselfe stopt from prayer, as in the place last quoted, so once before (*Jer.* 7. 16.) *Therefore pray not for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me, for I will not heare thee.* And as the Lord stopt *Jeremy* from prayer for them, so he professeth that if they who in former ages had been most prevailing with him, should now againe mannage their suite before him, yet he would not be moved by it. (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Then said the Lord unto me, though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my minde could not be toward this people.* As if the Lord had said; Though they should get my chiefe favourites, to sollicit their cause, and plead on their behalfe, yet they should finde me *in one minde, and that even they could not turne me.* Jesus Christ never solicited any cause but he sped in it, but the best of men may be earnest soliciters and not speed. For though good men will not solicit a bad cause before God, or pray against his revealed will, yet they doe not always hit his secret will. And God who saith to his people generally (*Ps.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee*: yet in some particular cases he will not deliver them, though they call upon him. Prayer is not onely an allowed, but a commanded meanes, and so the most probable meanes to obtain deliverance, yet that cannot always obtaine or fetch it. Yea God who often brings his people into trouble, on purpose to provoke them to seeke his help, yet, sometimes, will not help them though they seek him. And the reason is, because *he is in one mind, and will not be turned from his purposes, no not by prayer.* If once the Lord be resolved to destroy, prayer cannot save; Though *Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet* (saith the Lord) *my minde could not be toward this people, cast them out of my sight, and let them goe forth, such as are for the sword to the sword*, &c.

But if prayer cannot turne God, then you lay a temptation before us to turne away from prayer.

I answer, first, as was shewed before; prayer may turne God in reference to his outward dispensations, though it cannot turn him from any of his counsels and resolutions.

But then it may be enquired; how shall I doe to effect my prayer? For I know not what the purpose or resolution of God

is, I onely see what his dispensations are. And if so, I may pray against the minde or purpose of God; I may aske for the removing or taking away of that, which he is purposed shall continue; and I may aske the gift of that, which he is resolved not to bestow.

To this I answer; First, That though the minde of God to give us such a mercy, or to withdraw such an affliction, be a secret to us; yet this is revealed, that it is our duty to pray about these things. What God will give or doe for us when we pray is a secret; but this is revealed, that *in all things* we ought to pray. That's the Apostles rule (*Phil.* 4. 6.) *Be carefull in nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make your requests knowne unto God.*

Secondly, Suppose the things we pray about, whether for the having, or removing of them, be such as it is not the mind of God either to give or to remove. Yet we may please God, in praying for the attainement of those things, which it is not his pleasure to give, and in praying for the taking away of those things, which it is not his pleasure to remove. We doe not offend God, by asking that which he will not give, if the thing be such, as is in the generall nature of it according to his will. The Lord takes it well at our hands that we pray, and is well pleased to heare us pray, when he is not pleased to heare (that is, to grant) our prayers.

Thirdly, Be not turned from prayer, because prayer cannot turne God, for it is a great argument that the minde or purpose of God and his decree is to give such a mercy, or to remove such an evill, if we have an heart to pray much for or about it. For God who hath said, *I will be sought unto, that I may doe it for them* (Ezek. 36.) *hath not said unto the seed of Jacob, seeke ye me in vaine* (Isa. 45. 19.) And when God stirres up his people to pray, it is an argument he is ready to heare. *Thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine eare to heare* (Psal. 10. 17.) So that as God takes it well at our hands that we pray for many things which he hath no purpose to give us; so it is a good ground of faith that he hath a purpose to do such or such things for us, when he puts it into our hearts to pray for them.

Lastly, Let not any stumble at the duty of prayer, because of Gods unchangeablenesse; for we pray, not to change the minde of God but to fulfill it; we pray for the fulfilling of his decrees,

crees, not for the altering of them, for the fulfilling of his counsels, not the voiding of them. And because God *is in one minde, and none can turn him*, we have the more incouragement to pray. For all the good things that are in the mind, counsel, and purpose of God to doe for us, and bestow upon us, are born, and brought into the world usually by the hand of prayer: Prayer is (as it were) the midwife, to bring our blessings to the birth. Therefore though prayer cannot turn God, yet we have no reason to turne from prayer.

There is yet a fourth thing which may stop men, but cannot stop God; And that is nearnes of relation. Men are often turned out of the way when a neare relation stands in their way. They purposed to doe this or that, but that such a friend, or such a kinsman hath turned them from their purpose. 'Tis rare to finde such a spirit as the Lord by *Moses* observed & highly commended in the Tribe of *Levi* (Deut. 33. 9.) *Who said unto his father, and to his mother, I have not seene him, neither did he acknowledge his Brethren, nor knew his owne children.* That is, he was not turned by the neareft relations from executing that terrible sentence of the Lord upon the children of *Israel* his Brethren after they had made the Golden Calfe, of which you may read at large (*Ex.* 32. 26, 27, 28, 29.) It is truly said, That *relations have little entity in them, but they have the greatest efficacy in them*. And their efficacy hath never appeared more in any thing then in this, The turning of man from his purpose or his duty. But relations have no efficacy in them to stop or turne the Lord from his purposes. (*Isa.* 27. 11.) *It is a people that have no understanding, therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them, & he that formed them will shew them no favour.* As if the Prophet had said; When the Lord threatens to bring evill upon you, possibly yea will say, we are the worke of thy hands, he hath made us, surely then he will not destroy us. We find that argument pleaded (*Isa.* 64. 8.) *But now O Lord, thou art our father, we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the worke of thy hand: Be not wroth very sore O Lord*, &c. To plead our relation to God by Christ is the strongest plea in prayer, and to plead any relation to God, hath a great strength in it. Yet while some urge these, they signifie nothing, and have no force at all. They who are like that people in the Prophet, *a people of no understanding*, spirituall idiots, such as have no

no knowledge to doe good, or no practicall understanding in the things of God; such, I say, may urge their relation, and get nothing by it; *He that made them, will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will shew them no favour.* The Lord professeth strongly against any power which a relation shall have upon him to turne him, or take off the processe of his Judgement under high provocations from the highest of men. (*Jer.* 22. 24.) *As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim King of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence, and give thee into the hand of them that seeke thy life,* &c. To be as the signet upon the right hand, notes the most intimate neerenes of relation, yet the Lord breaks through this, and will not be turned away by it, from the severest actings of his own purposes. Thus it hath appeared that as the Lord is unchangeable in himselfe, so nothing can change him. *He is in one minde, who can turne him?*

And what his soule desireth, even that he doth.

Hence observe;

That God doth whatsoever he will, or whatsoever he desires to do.

There is no bound to the power of God, but his own will. When the Heathen asked in scorne, *Where is your God?* The Psalmist tells them plainly both where he was, and what he had been doing. (*Psal.* 115. 3.) *But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he pleased.* The doings of God know no bounds but his own pleasure; *He hath done whatsoever he pleased.* He will not indure to have any articles put upon him, nor any circles or limit-lines drawn about him. The power of God is regulated and determined by nothing but his will. A great Prince once said, *That he had indeed a circle about his head* (meaning his Crowne) *but he would not beare it to have a circle about his feete; he must go which way himselfe pleased, and doe whatsoever his soule desired.* Yet there are circles drawne *about all the powers of the world, only God hath none.* His government is purely arbitrary. Nor is it fit that the government of any but his should be so; *'Tis neither fit nor safe that any should govern arbitrarily or purely at will, but he who's will is altogether pure, but he who's will is so far from needing a rule, that it is one, yea the only unerring One,* (Ezek. 24. 14.)

I

I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to passe, and I will doe it, I will not goe backe, neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy wayes, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God. As if the Lord had said, It is my will to have it thus, and therefore it shall be thus. That which is most sinfull in man, is most holy in God, to act according to his owne will. Mans will is too crooked a rule for others to guid their actions by, or for himselfe to guide his actions by. He that saith, I will doe this or that, because I will, doth nothing as he ought. There should be much willingnesse, but none of our own will in what we doe. But as Gods will should be both the rule and reason of our actings, so it alwayes is of his owne. There is (as I may say) an holy wilfullnesse in God. *He will have what he will, and he will doe what he will.* God will not doe many things which he can, but he can doe whatsoever he will; and whatsoever he will doe, he is just and righteous in doing it. And this is the glory of God, to have such a power, and such a will. And there being such a power in God, with such a will, we need not feare his power. We leave men to their will as little as we can, whom we trust with much power. When men in power have nothing but their will to guide them, we presently feare oppression and tyranny, and that we shall be far from leading peaceable and quiet lives under them in all godlines and honesty, which is the most desireable and blessed fruit of Magistracy. Nor is this a pannicke or groundlesse feare, seeing the will of man is corrupt and sinfull, selfish and revengefull. And who can but feare to be under that power which hath no limits but a corrupt will? But who would feare to be under the power of God, acted by his will, seing he willeth nothing but what is righteous, just, and good. What can we expect but right from him who is righteousnesse? what but good from him (in a good cause) who is goodnes it self, how great or how unlimitted soever his power is? If some men might doe what they would, what evill would they not doe? There's nothing stands between some men, and the wronging of all men they have to doe with, but the want either of power or of opportunity to doe it. The Lord can do what he will, but he will doe nothing but what is good. He is able to ruine all men, but he will wrong no man, no not the worst of men. *What his soul desireth even that he doth;* but it is impossible his soul should desire to doe any thing but what is right. Lastly,

Laſtly, When it is ſaid, *Whatſoever his ſoule deſireth, even that he doth*, or more cloſe to the Originall, *He deſireth, He doth.* We learne, That,

It is as eaſie with God to doe a thing, as to deſire to have it done.

All men would doe what their ſoules deſire, but moſt men deſire that which they cannot doe; yea though men have a deſire to doe a thing, and a power to doe it alſo, yet it is not ſo ſoone done as deſired, there muſt be a preparation and the uſe of means before man can doe what he hath a power to do; ſo that though a man hath power proportionable to his deſire, yet he is not preſently a partaker of his deſire. But God can make his power as ſpeedy as his deſire. He can make the declaration of his will, and the execution of it contiguous. For though many things lye long in the will of God before they are done, & what he willed from eternity is done in time, & the time of doing it be yet a great way off, yet he can doe any thing as ſoon as will it, and whatſoever he willeth or deſireth, is, to him, as done already. (*Pſ.* 104. 30.) *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are created.* The creation there ſpoken of is providence, for that is a continued creation. The firſt creation was the production of all things out of nothing to that being which they had, but there is another worke of creation which is the continuing or renewing of things in their being, and of this he ſaith; *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit*, that is, thy power, *they are created, and thou renewеſt the face of the earth.* Thou makeſt a new world; And thus God makes a new world every year, ſending forth his Spirit, or quickning power in the rain, and Sun to renew the face of the earth. And as the Lord ſends forth his power in providenciall mercies, ſo in providenciall Judgements. *He looketh on the earth and it trembleth; He toucheth the hils, and they ſmoake* (ver. 32.) A man can ſoon give a caſt with his eye, ſo ſoon can God ſhake the earth, that is, either the whole maſſe of the earth, or the inferior ſort of men on the earth. When he *looketh*, or caſts an angry eye upon *the earth it trembleth. He toucheth the hils* (that is, the powers and principalities of the world) *and they ſmoake*; If he doe but *touch them they ſmoake*, that is, the dreadfull effects of the power and Judgement of God are viſible upon them. As ſoone as the Lord calls, all creatures readily tender their ſervice. (*Pſal.* 105. 31. & 34.) *He ſpake, and there came*

came divers ſorts of flies, and lice in all their coaſts. (ver. 34.) *He ſpake, and the Locuſts came; and caterpillers, and that without number.* If the Lord ſpeake the word, it is done. God ſpake the world into this beauty, he did but ſay, *Let there be light and there was light.* And he can ſpeake the world into trouble and confuſion; He doth but ſay, *Let there be darkneſs, and there is darkneſs.* It was an high ſpeech of *Cæſar*, who meeting with ſome oppoſition from that young noble Roman *Metellus*, ſaid, *Let me alone, leſt I deſtroy thee.* And preſently added; *It is eaſier for me to doe this, then to ſpeake it.* Such was his power, that he could eaſier take away a mans life, then give ſentence of death againſt him. This is moſt true concerning the great God of heaven and earth, there is no more difficulty in his doing of a thing, then in his deſiring and willing it to be done.

The generall truth of this verſe carryeth in it a twofold inference.

Firſt, Of terrour to the wicked, *God is in one minde*, the ſame opinion which he had of their wayes, and perſons heretofore the ſame he hath ſtill. The ſame curſes and Judgements which he hath denounced againſt them formerly, are in force ſtill. Is it not a terrible thing to incorrigible wicked men, to remember that what the ſoule of God deſireth, he doth, when his ſoul deſireth nothing but vengeance and wrath for them. *Therefore tremble before the Lord ye wicked, and be ye ſore affraid at the remembrance of his unchangeableneſſe.*

Secondly, Of abundant comfort to the faithfull and righteous, The mind of God is mercy to them, and he is in this one mind towards them, none can turne him. His ſoul deſireth to doe them good; *And whatſoever his ſoule deſireth, that he doth.* What can Saints deſire more, then that God ſhould doe all that for them which he deſireth? and all that he will aſſuredly doe. *Therefore rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his unchangeableneſſe.*

JOB, CHAP. 23, Vers. 14, 15, 16, 17.

For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him.
Therefore I am troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.
For God maketh my heart soft, and the Allmighty troubleth me:
Because I was not cut off before the darkneſſe, neither hath he covered the darkneſſe from my face.

IN the former verſe *Job* exalteth God; firſt, in his unchangeablenes, *He is in one mind, who can turn him?* Secondly, in his Almightineſs, *What his ſoul deſireth even that he doth.* In the 14. ver. he ſpeaks of God in reference to his perſonal experience, and brings down the generall propoſition to his own particular caſe. As if he had ſaid; *I indeed have found, that what his ſoule deſireth, even that he doth, mine own ſad experience proves and bears witneſs to this truth, my preſent ſtate makes the Comment of this text; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me.*

Verſ. 14. *He performeth.*

שלם *in prima ſignificatione, denotat, implere, finire, deinde in pace eſſe; etiam ſolvere, compenſare.* Pined.

The word hath various tranſlations, but all are well ſumm'd up in this, *He performeth.*

Firſt, It ſignifies to pay; payment is performance, therefore the ſame word is uſed both for performing and paying.

Secondly, The word ſignifies, *to be at peace*; and this agrees well with the former, becauſe he that performeth and payeth according to his word, hath peace, both in himſelfe and with other men. An honeſt pay-maſter ſits down in peace, and prevents his own trouble. But to the matter; *He* (that is, *God*) *performeth*

The thing that is appointed for me.

ישלים חקי *quia reddit ſtatutum meum.* Mont.

'Tis the ſame word which we had at the 12th verſe of this Chapter, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary, or my appointed food.* Here we render it, *the thing that is appointed*

appointed for me. The word is often uſed in the 119. *Pſalme*, and ſignifieth any Ordinance, Law, Statute, or Decree, whether divine or humane, for all theſe are the appointments, either of God or man, about things to be done, or forborne. And as God makes appointments of things which he would have us doe, ſo of ſuch things as himſelfe will do to, or concerning us.

Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates it here, as we doe at the 12. verſe, implying *neceſſary food*, or *the proviſions of this life. Becauſe he furniſhed me with my dayly bread.* That which we render, *the thing that is appointed for me*, he renders, *my daily bread.*

Perfecit neceſſaria mea. Vatab. i.e. perfecit quicquid mihi erat opus, ipſe corporis mei artifex & omnium quæ in me ſunt.

Another, learned in that language, agrees in the ſame ſence and varyes very little in words; *He hath performed, or accompliſhed thoſe things which were neceſſary for me, or all thoſe things which I ſtand in need of.* He who ſet up this frame of my body, and hath given me this life, hath adminiſter'd all things needfull for the upholding of this body, and for the maintaining of this life. And ſo, the words carry *Jobs* ſence or acknowledgment of the fatherly care and kindneſſe of God towards him. *What his ſoule deſireth, even that he doth, for he furniſheth me with daily bread, and he performeth what is neceſſary for me, or ſupplyeth all my wants.* According to which ſence Mr *Broughton* renders the ſecond part of the verſe alſo; *And many ſuch graces are with him.* Thus *Job* ſpake at the 10. Chapter, ver. 8. 12. *Thy hands have made me and faſhioned me together round about. Thou haſt granted me life and favour, and thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.* So that the minde of theſe tranſlaters ſeemes to be this, That *Job* would ſet forth the unchangeableneſſe of Gods decree in giving him his appointed comforts, as well as ſorrows.

Quicquid deus decrevit abſolvet ſive in bonum ſive in malum. Merc.

Yet rather by this appointment (or the thing which God had appointed him) we are to underſtand (as I conceive) his afflictions onely and his ſorrow; As if he had ſaid; *I finde that God will doe what he hath a minde to doe, how grievous ſoever it be either to the minde or fleſh of man: for he performeth the thing that he hath appointed for me; he hath appointed me to ſorrow, and I have had ſorrow and trouble ſtore; And he will not diſmiſſe me or let me go out of his hand, till he hath performed every title of what he hath appointed for my portion of ſorrow and ſuffering in this world.* And to ſhew how much he was aſſured of this, He ſpeakes in the preſent tenſe; *Not he will performe, but he performeth*, &c. As if he had

Non me miſſum faciet, donec impleverit, quæ in ſtatuit. Merc.

had ſaid; He will as ſurely doe it, as if he were now a doing it.

Hence obſerve.

Firſt, *That God will certainely perform all his appointments concerning man; He is able to doe it, and he will doe it.*

This point was largely inſiſted upon from thoſe words of the former verſe; *He is in one mind, who can turn him?* God doth what he hath a mind to do, therefore I ſhall not here ſtay to ſhew the certainty of Gods performing what he hath appointed, but to ſhew the appointment of all things which he performeth. Take the obſervation thus formed.

Whatſoever God performeth, or doth to any man, was before appointed, or decreed for, or concerning him.

All the workes of God in time, were his decrees before time, he performeth the thing that is appointed, and appointed by himſelfe, and his appointments are as himſelfe is from everlaſting. Whatſoever God doth, we finde it under an appointment.

Firſt, and eſpecially, as to (the buſines in hand) the afflictions and ſuffering of his ſervants; All their ſufferings are under an appointment. (*Micah* 6. 9.) *The Lords voice cryeth unto the City, and the man of wiſdome ſhall ſee thy name, heare ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.* As if he had ſaid; your ſelves by your ſins are the procurers of it; we the Prophets are onely the reporters and publiſhers of it; But God himſelfe is the appointer of it. As publique and nationall rods, ſo private or perſonall rods are appointed; And as often as we feel their ſmart, we ſhould conſider their appointment. The Apoſtle (1 *Theſ.* 3. 3.) moves the Saints to a ſteadines of ſpirit under affliction upon this ground, *that no man ſhould be moved by theſe afflictions* (he doth not meane that we ſhould be without ſenſe of our afflictions, ſtroakes and ſufferings, but his meaning is, that we ſhould neither be moved by impatience under them, to murmure at them, nor be moved by undue feares to faint in them, why?) *for your ſelves know that we are appointed thereunto.* The afflictions are appointed to us, and we are appointed to them, and *your ſelves know it.* This doctrine hath been publiſhed to you, that afflictions are under a divine appointment, that there is a decree of God about them. And that, Firſt, as to the matter, of what ſort the affliction ſhall be; ſecondly, as to

to the meaſure or degree; how great the affliction ſhall be. Thirdly, the appointment reaches the ſeaſon, and that twofold. Firſt, when the affliction ſhall begin, and ſecondly, how long it ſhall continue; every thing, in affliction, is under an appointment.

Secondly, As our afflictions, ſo alſo our comforts are under an appointment. As the Lord hath appointed the Gall, ſo the honey of our cup, as the cold and winter, ſo the warme and ſummer ſeaſons of our lives. (*Iſa.* 61. 2, 3.) *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meeke, &c. To proclaime the acceptable yeare of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourne; to appoint unto them that mourne in Sion* (and this appointment, in execution, is the fulfilling of the firſt appointment by decree, *to appoint unto them that mourne in Sion*) *to give unto them beauty for aſhes, the oyle of Joy for mourning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavines.* And as our ſpirituall comforts, ſo our temporall, our outward ſalvations and protections are under an appointment. (*Iſa.*26.1.) *Salvation ſhall God appoint for walls and bulwarkes.*

Thirdly, As the wall of protection is ſet up, ſo the ſword and all other inſtruments of deſtruction are ſent out by appointment. (*Jer.* 15. 3.) *I will appoint over them foure kindes, ſaith the Lord, the ſword to ſlay, and the doggs to teare, and the fowles of heaven, and the Beaſts of the Earth to devoure and deſtroy.* And as the deſtroying ſword, ſo the place whether the ſword ſhall goe to deſtroy is under an appointment. When the queſtion is put (*Jer.*47. 6.) *O thou ſword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thy ſelfe into thy ſcabbard, reſt and be ſtill*; The anſwer is made (*ver.* 7.) *How can it be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a Charge againſt Askelon, and againſt the Sea-ſhore, there he hath appointed it.* He hath appointed this place, this ground, this Country, this City, this ſhoare for the ſword; and the ſword being under an appointment, muſt doe as it is appointed. If we looke all the Scripture over, we ſhall finde all things under an appointment; As firſt our children are appointed; when *Adam* had another Son, his wife *Eve* ſaid (*Geneſis* 4. 25.) *God hath appointed me another ſeed in ſtead of Abel, whom Cain ſlew.* Secondly, our wives are appointed. When *Abrahams* ſervant was ſent by him

to

to *Meſopotamia* for a wife for *Iſaac*, he ſaith, *If the woman come whom thou haſt appointed to be wife to my Maſters Son.* &c. That this woman rather then any other ſhould be his Maſters ſons wife, was (he knew) by the appointment of God (*Gen.* 24. 14. 44.) Thirdly, All our Times are appointed by God. (*Exodus* 9. 5.) *My times are in thy hand* (ſaith *David* Pſ. 31. 15.) Fourthly, not only things that are or exiſt, but things that as yet are not, come under an appointment. What ſhall be is as certaine to God, as what already is. (*Iſa.* 44. 7.) *And who as I, ſhall call, and ſhall declare it, and ſet it in order for me, ſince I appointed the ancient people? And the things that are coming, and ſhall come?* The ancient who have been long and ſtill are, were appointed by me, and the things which are not but ſhall be in a continued ſucceſſion, like Linkes of a Chaine holding one in another, are appointed by me. The things that *are coming* (or that are neere the birth) and *ſhall come* (things afarre off) all that is to be done, as well as all that hath been done, is under an appointment. Fifthly, as all the paſſages of our lives, ſo death it ſelfe is under an appointment (*Heb.* 13. 27.) *It is appointed for all men once to dye.* And as death is appointed, ſo the ſeaſon or the when of it is appointed. (*Job* 7. 1.) *Is there not an appointed time to man?* Againe (*Job* 14. 5.) *Thou haſt appointed his bounds that he cannot paſſe.* Sixthly, as the dayes of man, ſo *The day of the Lord*, the day of Judgement, is under an appointment. (*Acts* 17. 31.) *Becauſe he hath appointed a day wherein he will Judge the world in righteouſneſſe by that man whom he hath ordained*; the time is fixt, he hath appointed a day, a day of Judgement. When the apppointed day ſhall be is a ſecret, but, that he hath appointed a day is revealed, and that he hath appointed all the motions and changes that are coming upon the world, till that day come. So then

Firſt. *We are not governed by blinde fortune.* Nor

Secondly, *By a Stoicall Fate.*

Thirdly, *But by a divine appointment.*

Further; The appointment of God determineth, firſt, the end; ſecondly, the meanes leading to and promoting the attainement of the end. Laſtly, as God appointeth Great things, ſo the leaſt, *A ſparrow falls not to the ground without him*, that is, without his appointment, or without an order from heaven, yea *the hairet of our head are all numbred* (Matth. 10. 29, 30.)

This

This truth well digeſted is enough not onely to ſupercede and ſtop all the undue feares, but to eſtabliſh the comforts of all the people of God. What can be better for us, then that all things are in ſo good a hand, that they are appointed and meaſured out by God, that he cuts out our condition for us, that he formes and frames our ſtate for us. It hath been ſaid, *Every man is the faſhioner of his own condition*, there is ſome truth in that, mens conditions are much according to their actings; but God is the ſupream faſhioner and orderer of every mans ſtate and portion. The portion of the wicked is ſet out by God. (*Job* 20. 29.) *This is the heritage of the wicked, and the portion appointed to him of God.* Theirs is indeed a ſad portion, but it is a juſt and a deſerved one. He alſo faſhions and cuts out a portion for his own people; And though theirs is often for the preſent a bitter one, and ſo deſerved by them yet he alwayes make it a good one to them, and hath prepared a better for them which they have not at all deſerved. *He performeth the thing that is appointed for me:*

And many ſuch things are with him.

Some expound this of the paralel dealings of God with other perſons; *He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many ſuch things are with him*: That is, I am not the onely Inſtance, or example of this; God doth the like alſo to others, my caſe is not ſingular, I am not alone in the thing, God hath not appointed a portion for me only, and performed it accordingly to me; no, he doth many ſuch like things; yea whatſoever he doth with, or concerning any elſe, it is by appointment and according to the determinate purpoſe of his own will. *Many ſuch things are with him.*

Hæc multitudo refertur ad ſimilia exempla hominum quos deus ſimiliter exercet ſive exercere poſſit ſi velit. Non unicum (inquit) ego ſum exemplum hujus libereæ dei poteſtatis.

But, ſecondly, I conceive that we may rather expound theſe words (*many ſuch things*) of ſuch things as *Job* had already ſuffered; As if he had ſaid, The Lord hath *performed the thing that he hath appointed for me*, hetherto (I have had my portion of trouble and ſorrow unto this day) and *I am like to have more*; *I doe not yet perceive that God hath done with me*; for as our comforts, and the proviſions of this, ſo our afflictions and the ſorrows of this life, are, or may be renewed or returned upon us every day. Our bread is called (in that prayer which Chriſt taught his Diſciples) *daily bread*, that is, the bread that is brought out to us every

Cum jam me quibus voluerit tormentis affligerit, & alia ad hæc quanta voluerit mihi infligere poterit. Hieron:

every day; And when we have received our bread for one day, we may say, *many such things are with him*; that is, he hath bread enough for us for to morrow, and for next day, for this yeare and for the next, for all the dayes and yeares of our lives, *many such things are with him*; So, when we have suffered and been troubled this day, we may say, he hath other sufferings and troubles for us against next day, when these are gone and blown over; this I suppose is the thing that *Job* aimes at; so that he seemes to prepare himself for new rods, and to say, in the sweetest and humblest composure of a meek and quiet spirit, *It is the Lord, let him doe with me, what seemeth good in his owne eyes. All that God hath performed to me-wards he hath appointed for me, yet I am not of opinion that God hath spent all his appointments upon me; surely he hath not drawne his quiver dry, he hath yet more arrowes to shoot at my poor already wounded and bleeding breast. My heart misgives or rather gives me, that he hath not yet shewed me all the troubles which he hath appointed for the tryall of my graces, for the exercise of my patience, and for the purging out of my corruptions. For many such things are with him.* And this we may take two wayes.

Multa jam passus sum, tamen si Dud voluerit anima ejus stet. Phil.

Videtur se patientissimè comparare ad nova flagella.

First, In reference to the power of God, he can doe many such things as these, he can do what he hath done, his arme is not shortned.

Secondly, In reference to his own deservings; many sins are with me; and therefore I have reason enough to suspect, that many more sorrowes are appointed for me. I may need more humbling and refining, and therefore it is like I shall have it, and that another furnace is heating for me. In how holy a frame was the spirit of this good man! He justifieth God in all that he had done, and he was ready to submit (though it made his flesh feare and tremble at the thought of it, as he confesseth it did in the next verse; yet I say, he was ready to submit) to whatsoever God would yet do, knowing that he could, and being much perswaded that he would doe much and many things more then he had done yet. For (saith he) *Many such things are with him.*

Hence note.

First, *God hath variety of wayes to exercise and chasten his in.*

As he hath more then one Blessing, so he hath more then one Chastening;

Chastning; as he hath many Comforts, so he hath many sorrows ready at his hand; as he is *the God of all Consolation*, so he is the God also of all tribulation; and as he can make all Consolation to abound, so he can make all tribulation to abound; *many such things are with him.* When you have suffered one affliction, doe not thinke that you have suffered all, there may be a second at hand. They are usually *twin-borne*, and sometimes we may say (as *Leah* in another case, *Gen.* 30. 11.) *A troupe cometh.* Troubles come by Troupes. We read the Lord threatning his ancient people the *Jews* after great sufferings, and Judgements had been upon them, with a succession of new Judgements. The whole twenty eight Chapter of *Deutrinomie* is but a continued description of that variety both of blessings and curses which God hath at hand stored up in his Treasures. Read how various his Judgements are (1 *Kings* 8. 37. 2 *Chron.* 6. 28.) *I will punish you yet seaven times more for your sins* (Lev: 26. 18. 24.) And that *seaven times more* may be understood; First, in reference to the variety of their punishments, you shall have seaven kindes of punishments more then you had; secondly, in reference to the degrees of their punishment; I will make them seaven times greater then they were. As *Nebuchadnezar* commanded the fiery furnace to be heated seven times hotter: so the Lord can command the furnace to be heated seaven times hotter: And as the Lord can chasten and afflict his people seaven times more both in kinde and degree, so they may need seaven sorts of afflictions more, and a furnace heated seaven times more then formerly, either for the purging out of their sins, or for the exercise and proofe of their Graces. For though the Lord hath a great variety of afflictions at his command, yet he never layeth any one of them upon us, but when there is need. The Apostle *Peter* gives us assurance of this from God (1 *Ep:* 1. 6.) For having said, that Saints are *kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, wherein they greatly rejoyce*, he presently adds, *though now for season (if need be) ye are in heavinesse through manifold temptations.* We see the temptations wherewith the Lord exerciseth the heires of heaven here on earth, are many, yet they never feele these but when *need is*; And many have as much need of the rod for their spirituall estate, as they have of bread for their naturall. *Many such things are with him.*

Secondly, Note.

We deſerve more and ſorer afflictions then God hath yet layed upon any of us.

They who ſin leaſt ſuffer leſſe then their ſin, how much ſoever they ſuffer here. (*Pſal.* 103. 10.) *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, ſo great is his mercy to them that feare him.* The Text is to be underſtood of them that feare God: *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins*, that is, in proportion to our ſins, nor *rewarded us according to our iniquities*, that is, we have not had that meaſure of trouble which anſwers the meaſure of our iniquities. *Ezra* made humble confeſſion of this in the name of the Jewiſh Church (*Ezra* 9. 13.) *And after all that is come upon us,* (much is come upon us) *for our evill deeds, and for our great treſpaſſe, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſſe then our ſins deſerve,* &c. Their puniſhment was great, yet leſſe then their iniquities. As all the afflictions and miſeries of this life are leſſe then the glory that is promiſed (*Ro.* 8. 18) *I count that the ſufferings of this preſent life are not worthy to be compared to the glory that ſhall be revealed*; So all the ſufferings of this life are not to be compared with the deſerts of the leaſt ſin committed by us, nor with the leaſt comfort of the Spirit which is given to us. As the good things which God beſtows upon us are above and beyond any worthines of ours, ſo the evills with which he chaſtneth his children, yea or puniſheth the worſt of wicked men in this life, are below and on this ſide what they are worthy to receive.

Non ſunt condignæ paſſiones hujus vitæ.
1 ad priſtinam culpam quæ remittitur.
2 ad præſentem conſolationis gratiam quæ impertitur.
3 ad futuram gloriam quæ promittitur.
Punit Deus infra condignum, & remittit bona ultra condignum.

Verſ. 15. *Therefore am I troubled at his preſence, when I conſider him I am afraid of him,* &c.

This and the next verſe expreſſe the ſtate of *Jobs* ſpirit upon the former diſcovery, or how he was affected with this thing, that *many ſuch things were with God.* I have often met with other paſſages in this book which have a neerneſſe of ſignification with theſe words, and therefore I ſhall with the more ſpeed paſſe thorow them, and part with them.

Therefore am I troubled at his preſence.

The words (probably) are an anſwer to an objection; for his friends

friends had charged him with fear and trouble of ſpirit at the preſence of God upon another account, even becauſe of the guiltines of his conſcience, or becauſe of his great wickedneſſe. So (*Ch.* 22. *v.* 10.) *Eliphaz* having ſhewed him his ſin, *thou haſt ſent the widdow empty away, the armes of the fatherleſs have been broken,* preſently adds the ſad effects which were upon him, *therefore ſudden feare troubleth thee, and ſnares are round about thee*: As if he had ſaid, thou haſt been very wicked in thy actions, and therefore thou art ſo unquiet in thy ſpirit. Thou haſt been uncharitable and injurious to men; *therefore thou art troubled at the preſence of God.* No, ſaith *Job*, my trouble of ſpirit doth not ariſe from my guilt (though I have ſin and iniquity enough about me, to deſerve greater Chaſtenings then theſe which are upon me) but the cauſe of my trouble ariſeth from the knowledge and apprehenſions which I have of God, who *is in one mind, and who can turne him? he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many ſuch things are with him.* This is the ſpring and ground of my trouble: I am troubled both with the feeling of my preſent calamities, and with the fear of greater.

Quis ita potens ut abſolutè unicuique libet faciet, & hac poteſtate nunc in me utitur.

The word ברהל *turbare accelerare.*

The word ſignifies both *to make haſte*, and *to trouble*, the reaſon is, becauſe, as ſome ſay, trouble makes haſt, *ill newes comes apace*; or, ſecondly, becauſe we are very haſty to get out of trouble; and uſually over-haſty; he that is in trouble would fain be out of it; no man loves to ſticke in ſuch a condition, therefore the ſame word in the Hebrew elegantly ſignifies both to make haſt, and to trouble, And hence one of the Ancients tranſlates: *Therefore have I haſtened to his preſence.* Expounding it thus: *Becauſe he hath thus afflicted me, therefore leaving all the world; I make haſt to him, I throw my ſelfe upon him, and leave my ſucceſſe to him*; that's a good ſence, and very ſpirituall; For the Saints being afflicted make haſt to God becauſe he is their father, and becauſe he alone is able to be their deliverer; who would not make haſte to God upon ſuch an intereſt? A wicked man turnes from God by ſinning againſt him, and he runs away from God afflicting him. He that delights in ſin, cannot delight in God, who is the avenger of ſin: but afflictions draw unto neerer to God, *therefore have I haſtned* (ſaith that tranſlation) *into his preſence.* But we have rendred it (as I conceive) better to the Intendment of this place.

Propterea ad cum feſtinavi, quod ipſe exponit. Quia me tribulavit, ideo reliquis tempeſtatibus ad eum feſtinavi. Auguſt.

Therefore am I troubled at his presence.

The letter is, *at his face*, or *because of him*; that is, for feare of him.

Therefore am I troubled.

Job was troubled upon a twofold account.

Sensu flagellorum praetentium, mutu furorum. Jun.

First, With the paine and smart of his then present sufferings: Secondly, With feare of further or future sufferings. *I am troubled at his presence.*

The presence of God is most desireable; what is it that Saints wish and rejoyce in comparatively to the presence of God? *My soule thirsteth for God; when shall I come and appeare before God?* saith *David*, (Psal. 42.2.) How greedy was he of the presence of God? how did he (as it were) tell the clocks, and count every hour a day, every day yeare, till he was restored to it. And in another place, how earnestly doth he deprecate his banishment from the face of God, as the forest punishment, (*Psal.* 51. 11.) *Cast me not away from thy presence.* Yet here *Job* confesseth, *I am troubled at his presence.*

Hence note.

God can easily vary the appearances of himselfe to us.

He can discover himself so to us, as that his presence shal be better to us then life, better to us then ten thousand of these lower worlds, or as the heaven of this lower world, yea as the onely felicity of that heaven which is above. What is heaven, but this presence of God. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life; In thy presence is fulness of Joy* (Psal. 16. 11.) Thus God can make himselfe knowne with a delightfull presence, yet he can make himselfe known, and often doth, even to his owne, with a dreadfull and an amazing presence. God in whom there is no variablenesse, nor shadow of turning, can vary the demonstrations of himself to us, as much as light varieth from darknesse, or life from the shadow of death. God hath a light side, and a darke side as to manifestation, though in himself he is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. Sometimes his presence is sweetness and joy, even joy unspeakable and glorious; at other times, his presence is bitternesse and sorrow, even sorrow unspeakably grievous. There is nothing so

so dreadfull to wicked men at any time as the presence of God. As it hath been their wretched care to hide their sins from God as much as they could, so they would count it their happinesse to have their persons hid for ever from the presence of God. That which is both the sin and trouble of the wicked at all times, is the trouble, if not the sin of some godly men at sometimes, namely, the presence of God, not in it selfe, but with respect to the manner of his manifesting himselfe to them, and dealing with them. As will appeare further in the next clause of this verse. *I am troubled at his presence.*

When I consider I am afraid.

Cum diligentius considero ejus tantam potentiam, cujus nunc in me specimen vides, non possum quin expavescam, non quid in me, sit iniquitas sed ne deinceps pergat sua potentia me affligere. Hierc.

As if he had said, *When I seriously weigh and have deep thoughts in my mind, when I set my understanding throughly on work to consider the severity of Gods proceedings with me, and when I remember the wormewood and the gall, those bitter tasts and sad experiences which I have had already of his dreadfull power, then I am afraid.* And this fear ariseth not from the guilt or accusations of my own conscience, but lest the Lord should againe act and put forth that his terrible power upon me.

But what feare is here meant? or how was *Job* afraid upon the taking up of this consideration? I answer,

There is first, a pure filial or son-like feare, when we are afraid to sinne against and displease our father. This feare is a speciall grace promised in the new Covenant, and the beginning of wisdome.

Secondly, There is a pure slavish feare, when we dread God as a Judge, and revenger. This feare is the issue of the Covenant of workes, and the beginning of sorrow.

Thirdly, There is a mixt feare, not a pure filial, nor a pure slavish feare, but with a mixture or ingrediency of both. Such I conceive the feare of *Job* was; his was a mixt-feare; it had some tang of slavery in it, and it had some touch of Son-ship in it; there was much of the Spirit of Bondage in it; and something of the Spirit of Adoption in it. With the former fear many good men have been much exercised in all ages, especially before Christ came in the flesh, and the clearer breaking and beaming out of Gospel light, (*Rom.* 8. 15.) *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage to feare againe.* And (*John* 14. 27.) *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

nor

nor be ye afraid; that is be not burdened and oppreſt with that ſervile and ſlaviſh fear which you are ſubject to. Chriſt ſpake it to his own Diſciples, for even at that time deepe impreſſions of that feare were upon them, doubting much what would become of them, when he ſhould (of which he had told them) leave the world, and be gone from them. And beſides that ſpeciall reaſon which the Diſciples then had to fear at that time. This fear uſually ariſeth from two reaſons, in others, at all times.

Firſt, From the Conſideration of their owne weakneſſe and frailties.

Secondly, From the Conſideration of the Majeſty and greatneſſe of God when they Conſider theſe things they are afraid. And though Beleevers are freed from the prædominancy of ſlaviſh fear, and are indued with infuſions of true filial feare, yet they are often taken with this mixt feare, as in reference to their owne weakneſſe, ſo reſpecting the Majeſty of God, with whom they have to doe. *When I conſider I am afraid of him.*

Obſerve.

That the Majeſty and power of God duely Conſidered, are terrible even to his own people.

Many men have ſlight thoughts of the great God, they tremble not, they feare not; what's the reaſon? they Conſider not; *they are careleſs, and therefore they are feareleſſe, they are ignorant, and therefore they are confident.* There are none ſo bold as they who are thus blind. *Who is the Lord* (ſaid Hard-hearted *Pharoah*) *that I ſhould obey his voice to let Iſrael goe? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Iſrael goe.* Thats a ſad Confidence that proceeds from ignorance, and a ſad feareleſneſſe that hath no ground but careleſneſſe. I remember what the anſwer was of a very Godly man upon his death-bed; who having much trembling upon his ſpirit at the apprehenſion of the greatneſſe, Majeſty, and glory of God, it was ſaid to him by a Godly friend that came to viſit him; *Sir, you have known God, and been long acquainted with him, why are you thus full of feare and trembling?* O, ſaith he, *if I knew God more, I ſhould tremble more.* If we were but more acquainted with, and did more Conſider of the Infinite greatnes of God, and of our owne diſtance from him as creatures, much more as ſinners, how ſhould we be ſwallowed up with divine amazements; ſo that we muſt

muſt charge it upon the want of Conſideration, that ſo many have ſuch undue and unbecoming thoughts of God, as alſo that their thoughts fall ſo much below both their duty, and their ſinne: if we did but Conſider how ſinfull we are, and how holy God is, we ſhould alwayes ſerve him with feare, and rejoyce with trembling. *When I conſider I am afraid of him.* Job was afraid of him when he conſidered him, and ſo was *Aſaph* (Pſal. 77. 3.) *In the day of my trouble I ſought the Lord, my ſore ran in the night and ceaſed not, my ſoule refuſed to be comforted. I remembred God and was troubled, I complained and my ſpirit was overwhelmed.* Such a remembring of God is not a bare act of the mind, in oppoſition to forgetfulneſs, as if *Aſaph* had ſaid, *I remembred God*; that is, *I did not forget him*, but *I remembred God*, that is, I fixed my heart upon him, I minded him fully, or ſet him fully before my minde: though the remembrance of God is the ſpring of Comfort to us, and that many wayes, yet an *Aſaph*, a holy man, the holyeſt among many men, may be troubled when he remembers God, when he Conſiders his glory, greatneſſe, power, and Majeſty, and himſelfe a poore worme. When the holy Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaw the Lord (in viſion) ſitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and ſaw the Seraphims covering their faces and their feete, and heard them crying one unto another, and ſaying, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hoſts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* Then he ſaid; *Woe is me for I am undone, becauſe I am a man of uncleane lips*, &c. What a concuſſion was there upon his ſpirit upon the meeting of theſe two viſions; firſt, that of the holines of God; ſecondly, that of his own uncleanneſſe, (*Iſa.* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.) *Moſes* who had ſuch intimacy with and acceſſe unto God, is yet deſcribed trembling at his giving the Law (*Heb.* 12. 21.) *And ſo terrible was the ſight, that Moſes ſaid, I am exceedingly afraid and tremble.* *Moſes* knew that God was his friend, a God in Covenant with him, yet *Moſes* ſaid, *I exceedingly feare and quake*; the ſight and voice of God is our Bleſſednes, yet there may be a troubleſome and a terrible both ſight and voice of God, even *Moſes* was afraid: and ſo was *Habakkuk* (Ch. 3. 16.) *When I heard* (that is, thy Speech, ver. 2.) *my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entred into my bones, and I trembled in my ſelfe*, &c. And at laſt wicked men (though now ſo unconſidering who God is) ſhall have ſuch Conſiderations of him as ſhall for ever drowne and ſwallow them

up

up in a deluge of feare: the thoughts of the presence of God will be Eternall terror to them, who now are unmoved with the thoughts of his presence, or who have not God in all their thoughts. There is a presence of God which shall be death to thē; who have not lived in a due and awfull consideration of his presence. Thus the Apostle describes the punishment of wicked men (2 *Thes.* 1. 9.) *They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.* We may understand it two wayes.

First, They shall be punished by being put from the presence of the Lord; That's the punishment of losse, they shall be for ever excluded and banished from his presence. That which was their desire here, shall be their misery hereafter. They who care not for the presence of God in this world, shall be everlastingly cursed with the want of it, in the world which is to come.

Secondly, I rather conceive the meaning of that Text to be this, there shall be a manifestation of the wrathfull presence of God to them, and that shall be their punishment; the presence of the Lord is everlasting life, and light, and joy to his own people; but the presence of the Lord shall be terrible and dreadfull, even everlasting destruction to wicked men; they shall at last Consider it so much, that they shall feare to purpose. God will powre out such a presence upon them as they shall be equally unable to hide themselves from or stand before, but must lie downe and sink under it into the bottomlesse gulfe of despaire for evermore. If the Godly are sometimes afraid, where shall the wicked appeare. when God appeares. *When I consider* (with *Job*) *I am afraid of him.*

Vers. 16. *For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me.*

Nihilopinor addit novi, sed tantum versiculum praecedentem exponit. Sanct.

This verse is neer in sence with the former. *Job* herein further shewing both a reason why he was afraid of God, as also the effect which Gods dealing with him had upon his owne heart, or how he was affected with it. For

God maketh my heart soft.

The word rendred, *to make soft*, signifies the abateing of the strength of the heart.

But it may be enquired, what was this soft heart which God made him? I answer,

I answer; First, Negatively, by a soft heart here we are not to understand a penitent heart, or a heart broken with Godly sorrow at the sight, either of sin acted or wrath threatned (2 *Kings* 22. 29.) The Lord saith by the Prophet to *Josiah*, *Because thy heart was tender (soft or melted) and thou hast humbled thy selfe before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, therefore*, &c. The heart of flesh promised and given in the new Covenant, is a relenting and repenting heart. (*Ezek.* 36. 26.) *I will take away the heart of stone, and give you an heart of flesh*; that is, I wil make your heart soft, which before was hard, *Job* had such a heart, a soft heart in this notion, when he spake thus, but that's not the heart here meant; God had given him that softnes of heart before; for he is described (*Chap.* 1. 1.) *A man that feared God*; and a man that feareth God, is a man of a soft heart, (*Prov.* 28. 14.) *Blessed is the man that feareth alwayes, but he that hardneth his heart shall fall into mischiefe.* Where the hard heart and the feare of God are opposed; For wheresoever the true fear of God is in the heart, that is a soft heart.

Secondly, By a *soft heart*, is not here meant the patient heart; that's a soft heart in Scripture, a heart which is wiling to submit to and beare the burden that God layes upon it: in this sence God makes the heart soft, when, as he accustomes his to sufferings, so he fits them to suffer. Man naturally is (like *Ephraim*, Jer. 31. 18.) *As a Bullock unaccustomed to the yoak*, both of active and passive obedience. Onely God makes man submit his stiffe neck and hard heart to a suffering condition, and to answer the call of his sufferings. *Pharoah* is said to have a *hard heart*, because he did not yeeld to what God called him to by Judgements, he had not a patient but an unquiet spirit under the plagues sent upon him, nor did he obey what he was summoned to by the Lords voice in those terrible plagues. Now, though I grant that an heart made soft in patience is an excellent frame of heart, yet we cannot understand it so here; for *Job* had a patient heart, yea he had abundance of patience before, as he fully discovered at the very beginning and breaking out of his troubles; he did not flinch at the Crosse, but did embrace it. The Apostle exhorts all Christians to *Remember the patience of Job.* And we must apply that Scripture to *Job* before he came to this point. Therefore the softnesse of heart intended in this text is somewhat besides this.

 Thirdly,

Thirdly, Much lesse are we to understand by *a soft heart*, a *fearefull* or *a Cowardly heart*; that's a soft heart indeed, but in a bad sence. We have it so expressed (*Deut.* 20. 3.) *Heare ô Israel, you approach this day unto Battell against your Enemies, let not your hearts be faint*, &c. The Hebrew is, *let not your hearts be soft or tender*: a soft heart is not for a sword, nor for a battell, How shall they stand in dangers, who are fallen below them? A penitent heart, and a patient heart are proper in dangerous undertakings, but a cowardly heart is the greatest disadvantag in the world; therefore the Lord commanded this to be proclaimed to his people, *Let not your hearts be tender when ye goe forth against your Enemies*, or as it is exprest afterward. *Fear not, neither tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them.* *Job* had not such a soft heart, he was no coward when he complained before, *that the terrours of the Almighty did encamp against him as a dreadfull Army* nor while he said here, *God hath made my heart soft.*

Fourthly, A soft heart, is an effeminate, delicate, wanton heart. There are too many who have such soft hearts. Men that are fit for nothing but what is worse then nothing, to wallow in the sinfull delicacies and delights of this present world. The Apostle useth a word (1 *Cor.* 6. 9.) which expresseth this fully. We render it *effæminate*, but both the Greek and the Latine is *soft*; that is, persons wantonly and vainely given. And *Moses* applyes the very word of *Jobs* text to this kind of softness (*Deut.* 28. 56.) *The tender (or soft) and delicate woman, that would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicatenesse and tendernes, (or softnes) her eye shall be evill towards*, &c. This is not only a sinfull softnesse of heart, but the worst of sinfull softnesses. *Jobs* heart was far from this softnesse. As he was at that time a man of sorrows, so he had not been at any time a man of pleasure. But if *Jobs* soft heart were none of these, what was it then?

μέλακοι. Molles.

Liquefecit afflictionibus & consumpsit. Mesc.

Hæc mollitudo pertinet ad timorem vehementē quo quis corde & mente cedit divinæ majestati & potestati, cum quis facile recipit cogitationem et metum supernæ magnitudinis.

I conceive the soft heart proper to this place is, *a heart weakened and laid low through the burden of affliction.* A heart so worn out and spent that it can hardly bear any more, God had softned and even consumed his heart with sorrow and affliction. As he abhorred a hardnes of heart to resist the hand of God, so now he feared that his heart was not hard enough to beare it with that chearefulnesse and constancy of courage which he desired. Hard things are firm, compact, and knit together; those that are soft, are

are weake and unable to beare any weight. So that *Jobs* softness of heart was his weaknes to beare; And he gives this as an account why he was afraid of the power of God in any new sufferings. *O* (saith he) *God hath made my heart soft*; that is, I begin to faint, I finde my selfe drooping, I have not that strength of spirit (and though I am not a coward, yet) I have not that courage, that hardnesse, or hardinesse of spirit which I have had heretofore. He queried indeed (*Ch.* 6. 12.) *Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh brasse?* He had much strength, but not the strength of stones, nor was he hard as brasse. Now he saith plainly, my heart is made soft, it melteth like wax at the fire, I am so little like brass or stones in strength or hardnes, that I am altogether like wax or water. I am so far from having a minde to strive with, or rise up against God, that I know not how to stand before him, if he (which he seems to intend) should still goe on to afflict me. I am growne weake and unable to beare, yet my burden remaines, and will probably be made yet more heavy. This interpretation carrieth a distinct sence in it, and that which is most genuine to the scope of the place. Mr *Broughtons* translation of the latter clause of the verse, suites this exposition of the former with much clearnes; *For the Omnipotent hath softned my heart, and the Allmighty hath made me shrinke. Whereas we say the Allmighty troubleth me*, he saith, *The Allmighty hath made me shrinke*: For so a man commonly doth who eyther feares or feeles that which he is not well able to beare.

Teneritatem & imbecillitatem affert animo meo attendenti ad omnipotentiam ejus. Jun.

Hence Note.

The heart of a Godly man, even of the most Godly, may be so weakned under long continued sufferings, that he may finde himselfe utterly unable to beare them any longer.

Wicked men labour to strengthen and harden themselves all they can, to bear, in opposition to God, and Saints would strengthen and harden themselves all they can to beare in submission to God. *Pharoah* hardned his heart to oppose God striking him; he had stroake after stroake, and Judgement after Judgement, yet he would not yeeld: but at last God made his heart soft in one sense, though he hardned it in another. God appeared at last too hard for *Pharoah*, he could hold out no longer. And we finde the Lord speaking thus by *Ezekiel* to his people, who (it seemes by the language which God useth concerning them) had, as

as it were, ſet themſelves with unholy reſolutions to ſtand or rather ſtout it out with God, and beare the worſt that he could do unto them; *But* (ſaith the Lord, *Ezek.* 22. 14.) *can thine heart endure? or can thine hands be ſtrong in the day that I ſhall deal with thee?* When I deal with thee in wayes of Judgement, when I take thee in hand to puniſh and repay thee according to our workes, can thine heart endure? no! it cannot endure, it ſhall not be able to endure. The Lord doth not meane it of an enduring with ſubmiſſion and patience; So it is the honour of Saints to endure what ever God layes upon them, but to endure with ſtoutnes and reſiſtance, art thou able to ſtand it out, or can thine hand be ſtrong? no, thy heart and hand will be ſoft and weake, thou wilt not be able to beare it when I come to deale with thee. It is ſaid of Chriſt by *David* his type (*Pſal.* 22. 13.) when he was under thoſe terrible ſufferings for our ſins, that his heart was made ſoft (and if it were ſo with the greene tree, what muſt it be with the dry?) *I am powred out like water, and all my bones are out of joynt: my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midſt of my bowells.* Thus the ſufferings of Chriſt our head (who was alſo the Captaine of our ſalvation, and the mighty God) made his heart ſoft and melted him. His heart was not melted with ſorrow for his owne ſin, (for he was without ſin) but the ſorrow that was upon him for our ſins melted his heart. Whole heart will not melt & grow ſoft, (that is, unable to beare it) when God layeth his hand heavy and long upon him? Therefore we read in the Propher, how the Lord takes notice of this, and condeſcends to the weakneſſe of man (*Iſa.* 57. 16.) *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wroth.* I will not goe on to doe, as I have done. Why? Whats the reaſon of it? not but that God is able to continue his Contending, and to carry on his warre whether with perſons or with Nations for ever; but he hath reſpect to the poor Creature; *for* (ſaith he) *I will not doe it, leſt the ſpirit ſhould faile before me, and the ſoules which I have made.* How can ſoules faile? the ſoul is an immortall ſubſtance, and ſhall not faile for ever. The ſouls of the damned ſhall be under everlaſting Contendings, and never faile, they ſhall bear wrath for ever and not faile, yea their bodyes ſhall not faile, but through the power of God (ſuſtaining them under his Juſtice) ſhall endure everlaſting torments. The meaning of that expreſſion in the Prophet, is the ſame with this in the text *Their*

Their heart will be made ſoft; as yet they have ſtrength, faith, and courage to beare theſe afflictions, but if I continue them longer, their ſpirit and ſtrength, their faith and patience will faile, and be ſo worne out that they will not be able to abide it. *God would not Contend for ever*, leſt (as *Job* here complaines) he ſhould make their hearts ſoft.

And the Allmighty troubleth me.

That is, his preſence, or his diſpenſations trouble me, we ſee how much the ſpirit of *Job* was carryed out in the thing; And he uſeth a word here that ſignifieth the power of God to comfort and refreſh, or God in his allſufficiency to comfort, yet (ſaith he) this *Allmighty troubleth me*; that is, the thoughts or remembrance of him troubleth me. He hath caſt downe and grieved my ſoule already, and I am much troubled with fearefull apprehenſions of like ſeverities from him againe. Theſe words, the reader will eaſily perceive to be of the ſame minde and meaning with the 15th verſe of this Chapter, lately opened, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them, but proceed to the laſt verſe.

Deus, in cujus potentia ſufficientia, & divitiarum, ſolatium meum eſſe debebat, is me privavit omni ſolatio, & animam meam plane dejecit, deſerit me, terret me. Sanct.

Verſ. 17. *Becauſe I was not cut off before the darknes, neither hath he Covered the darknes from my face.*

Here *Job* gives another reaſon of his being thus troubled at the preſence of the Allmighty. *It is* (ſaith he) *becauſe I was not cut off before the darkneſs*; or, *becauſe I dyed not by thick darkneſs* (ſo Mr. *Broughton*) we ſay, *becauſe I was not cut off*, he, *becauſe I dyed not*; both meet in the ſame meaning. For death is a cutting off, and death will cut off or mow down the ſtrong, yea the ſtrongeſt, as the ſith doth either corne or graſſe. Thus ſpake *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs (*Iſa.* 38. 10.) *I ſaid in the cutting off of my dayes*, that is, when I thought I lay a dying. *Job* was troubled becauſe *he was not cut off.*

Before the darknes, or, *from the face of darkneſs.*

Death it ſelfe is darknes, and yet *Job* would faine have dyed before the darknes. There is a darknes of affliction and trouble ſpoken of often in this booke and elſewhere, which is more bitter to man then death it ſelfe. Some had rather be taken out of the world,

Quòd me non in ereme it, auferens a conſpectu non tantam hanc caliginem & tot mala. Mere.

world, then enſure the troubles of it. This is the firſt part of the reaſon, *I am troubled*, why? *becauſe I was not cut off before the darknes*, or before this trouble came; As if he had ſaid; *I ſhould have been glad, or it had been good for me, if death had prevented theſe troubles; this troubles me that I dyed not, that I went not to the grave before theſe troubles came upon me.* Thus *Job* gives way againe to his paſſion; he broke out much in this ſtraine or language at the third Chapter, where at large he openeth his wiſh for death, either that he had dyed before, or preſently after he was borne into this world, that he might have been at reſt, and ſo out of the reach of thoſe evills and calamities that did encampe againſt or beſet him round about. The reader may conſult what hath been done upon that Chapter, of which this verſe is an Epitome, and there finde the nature of this wiſh for death explained, as alſo what lively deſires *Job* had of death, or as this text ſpeaks, that, *he had been cut off before the darknes.* I ſhall here onely take notice; That to ſome, the ſorrows of this life are much more bitter then death it ſelfe; yea that God himſelfe hath ſometimes in a way of mercy & favour called ſome out of the world before he would let great troubles in, There was a promiſe made to *Joſiah* King of *Judah*, that, God being reſolved to bring trouble upon that people, yet he ſhould be *cut off before the darknes.* (2 Kings 22. 20.) *Becauſe thy heare was tender*, &c. *Behold therefore I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all the evill, which I will bring upon this place.* And when *Ahab* had humbled himſelfe before the Lord, even he went not without a reward for it, and his reward was this (1 *Kings* 21. 29.) *I will not bring the evill in his dayes*, He ſhall be *cut off before the darkneſſe.* *Jerom* ſpeaking of the troubles that came upon the Church, doth as it were applaud the death of *Nepotian* upon that Conſideration, *Happy he that dyed before theſe troubles lived.* It hath ſomewhat of mercy in it, to go out of the world before extraordinary affliction comes in; yet in theſe things we muſt take heed of being our owne Carvers; it is one thing to have a promiſe from God, that the Cloud ſhall not breake in our time; and another thing for us to wiſh and deſire to be out of the world before the Cloud breaks: The former argueth the tenderneſſe and care of God towards us, but the latter muſt needs argue either our unwillingnes to ſuffer either from or for

Fœlix Nepotianus qui hæc non vidit. Hier.

for God; Or our diſtruſt of his aſſiſtance and preſence with us to ſupport us in our ſufferings. If God will not cut us off by death before the darkneſſe, we ſhould be willing to live in the darkeſt darknes of outward calamity that ever fell upon this world. *Job* adds a ſecond reaſon of his troubled ſpirit in the laſt words of this verſe and Chapter.

Neither hath he Covered the darkneſs from my face.

I am troubled becauſe I have lived in troubleſome dayes, but though I have, yet God could have hidden me from thoſe troubles, or thoſe troubles from me; but as he hath let me live in the darkneſſe of trouble, ſo he hath not at all covered the darknes of trouble from me. I doe not only live in troubles, but I am alwayes looking troubles in the face. Mr. *Broughton* renders thus, *Nor he yet hideth gloomines from my face*; which he alſo paraphraſeth in theſe words; *Becauſe I finde neither death nor eaſe of ſickneſs, that I ſhould not feele theſe afflictions.* So that as he complains becauſe he dyed not before the darknes came; ſo becauſe God did not hid the darknes from him when it came, but let him have ſuch ſad viſions of it, This ſtill imports that *Job* had not that fulnes of ſubmiſſion to the diſpenſations of God, as duty called him to; and for this *Elihu* reproves him; yea God himſelfe chid and rebuked him, becauſe he tooke upon him ſo often *to give the rule*, and did not ſit downe more quietly under his appointment and portion for him. Though *Jobs* patience was great, yet he had not all patience, or all of patience. And though, I doubt not, but his patience had a perfect worke, yet he did not attaine to the perfection of patience. This (according to our tranſlation) is the ſence and ſumme of theſe words, concerning which many things have been ſpoken in the former part of the Booke, whether I referre the reader: yet before I paſſe them quite out of my hands, I ſhall gather up ſome other Rendrings of this verſe, and leave them to the readers Judgement and conſideration.

Firſt, Thus; *when I was onely not Cut off by darkneſſe, he hath hid himſelfe in darknes from my face.* This tranſlation the Originall may beare with ſome little ſupplement, which is uſuall in like Caſes, when there is no ſtraine upon the generall ſcope of the place, and the meaning is clearely this, *Whereas I am only not cut off by darknes*, that is, whereas my troubles are ſuch as have onely not

Nam ubi tantum non excisus ſum propter tenebras a facie meæ operit caligine. Cor.

not extinguiſhed my life, when I am in this pitiful miſerable plight, *He* (that is, God) *hath hid himſelfe from me in darknes.* So that here he ſpeaks of a twofold darknes or evill that was upon him: firſt, affliction upon his body; ſecondly deſertion upon his ſpirit, and ſo the negative particle *not*, is rendred by ſome *only not*, it is only not death with me, yet the Lord is pleaſed to hide his face from me; whereas we ſay, *He hath not Covered the darknes from my face*; this tranſlation ſaith, *He hath Covered his own face with darkneſs*, or, *Covered himſelfe with darkneſſe from my face.* Firſt, thereby intimating that God doth often joyne ſpirituall troubles with a corporall, the hidings of his face with the troubles of our fleſh. Secondly, that outward troubles are then moſt grievous to us, when God hides or withdrawes his preſence from us.

לא non, μονονὸ Tantum non, q. d. hoc effecit in me ab conſio ejus ut non quidam exſcinrere, ſed exciſiom proximus eſſem. Coc.

Another reading gives it as an admiration; *I am exceedingly troubled becauſe I was not cut off by the preſent darknes, and that he hath turned away darknes from my face*: As if *Job* had ſtood wondering that his life were thus prolonged, that his ſicknes and ſorrowes had not made an end of him; that ever he ſhould continue ſo long in ſuch a ſtorme as he had done, and who or what power it was that in thoſe his great preſſures, both of minde and body, did hinder or ſtay him from being covered with the ſhadows and darkneſſe of death.

Quod non fuerim exciſus a praſentibus tenebris, & quod a facie mea averterit caliginem. Bez.

Calvin. A third renders; *Becauſe he hath not cut me off through darknes, but hid darknes from my face*; and he gives the meaning of it thus; the reaſon why I am ſo much troubled and afflicted, is becauſe God hath not *cut me off through darknes*; that is, becauſe I have not had ſome ſecret or private affliction, but all the world hath taken notice of what hath been done to me. God hath not chaſtened me in the dark; theſe things have not been done to me in a corner. *Job* might ſpeake as the Apoſtle, *I am made a ſpectacle to the world, to Angels and men*, all beholding me in this pitifull condition. And this occaſions me much trouble of minde, becauſe as I ſee plainely, that the hand of God is gone out againſt me, ſo all others ſee it too, and they make ſeverall Interpretations of it. Had I been loſt in the darke I ſhould have borne it better, now I am made the common talke of the world, and how to anſwer their deſcants upon my condition, is more then a little trouble to me. This tranſlation hath a faire ſence as to the gene rall

rall truth; but the textuall Conſtruction (as they who are skilfull in the Grammer of the Hebrew know) will not beare it. And therefore I ſhall ſtay in our owne tranſlation, which is faire and clear as to the ſcope of the Chapter, ſhewing this good mans paſſion, breaking forth into ſome kinde of quarrell with the diſpenſations of God, becauſe he was not carryed out of the world before theſe troubles came in, or if he muſt needs ſtay, and be contemporary with them, becauſe he found no cover, no ſhelter from either the beholding or feeling of them.

Thus I have done with the firſt part of *Jobs* Anſwer to the third and laſt aſſault which *Eliphaz* made upon his Innocency, But as *Eliphaz* ſpake much againſt him, ſo he could not be ſatisfied to ſpeake but a little for himſelfe; He had more to ſay, both for his owne vindication, and the refutation of his opponent. What he ſaid the twenty-fourth Chapter will tell us, which comes next in order to be opened.

JOB, CHAP. 24. Verſ. 1.

Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, doe they that know him, not ſee his dayes?

Ad propoſitam queſtionem rectè pargit Jobus, rurſum affirmans, deum eum in aſſertundis probis, tum inpuniendis ſceleratis, non palam ſemper, ſed plerũq; occulta quadamratione, notis ipſi uni temporibus agere. Bez:

THis Chapter containeth the ſecond part of *Jobs* anſwer, to *Eliphaz*: the generall ſcope whereof, is to pull up the foundation of his friends ſuſpition of him, and diſpute againſt him, ſhewing that many men doe much evill in this life, who ſuffer none, and that many who are innocent, ſuffer much evill, and are not relieved: from both he concludeth, that the ſuffering of evill can be no concluding argument that any man is ſo; for then it muſt be ſo with all men, which moſt mens experience contradicteth.

So that here *Job* falls downe-right upon the poynt in debate, affirming what he had often affirmed before, that God both in aſſerting the innocency of the righteous, and in puniſhing the ſins of the wicked, uſeth much variety; and that his proceedings with the ſons of men, are ſo farre from being alwayes open and plain, that uſually they are very ſecret, concealed, and ſo much in the darke, that there is no print of his ſteps to be found. This ſeemes to be the deſigne and tendency of the whole Chapter; and the argument of it may be formed thus;

Ye, my friends have ſaid, that God puniſheth all evill doers in this life; ſeeing then he knoweth the length and continuance of their dayes in this world, why doth he yet ſuffer them to ſlip out of this world unpuniſhed. And if they are ſo frequently puniſhed in this world (as ye affirme) why doe not they who know God ſee it, and take notice of it?

But ſo it is, that many wicked men ſlip out of the world unpuniſhed, and the godly who know him doe not ſee judgement executed, therefore ſurely it is not the way of God preſently in this life to puniſh every offendor; nor can ye conclude that they who are afflicted are wicked,

wicked, ſeeing many of his people are not only afflicted by himſelf, but lie under the rod of the wicked a long time unrevenged and undelivered.

In the whole Chapter we may obſerve theſe three parts.

Firſt, A queſtioning propoſition in the firſt verſe, *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Allmighty, doe they that know him not ſee his dayes?*

Secondly, We have the confirmation of this propoſition, and that in two branches; Firſt, of innocent perſons not relieved; ſecondly, of wicked perſons not puniſhed; Thirdly, he concludes his whole diſcourſe in the laſt verſe of the Chapter by a ſtronger affirmation of what he had ſaid before; *And if it be not ſo now, who will make me a liar, and make my ſpeech nothing worth?*

Againe, More diſtinctly in this Chapter, we have the propoſition in the firſt verſe; ſecondly, the confirmation of it, made by an enumeration, of many groſſe ſinnes, which wicked men commit, and feel no ſmart, but paſſe unpuniſht; and thoſe ſinnes are either, firſt, againſt man, or ſecondly, againſt God.

Againſt man, firſt, by removing of the Land-marks in the ſecond verſe; ſecondly, violently taking away of cattell, in the third verſe. Thirdly, turning the poor out of houſe and home, in the fourth verſe; fourthly, lying in waite and watching their opportunities to rob & get their prey like wilde beaſts, at the fifth verſe; fifthly, reaping and carrying away other mens corn out of the fields by violence, at the ſixth verſe; ſixthly, uſing all manner of oppreſſion upon the poore, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. verſes.

Secondly, *Job* diſcovers their rebellion againſt God, and their ignorance of his wayes: for though both theſe be included in the former acts (whoſoever ſins againſt man, ſins againſt God too) yet there are ſins that are more peculiar and immediate againſt God. And of theſe he ſpeakes at the 13. verſe. *They rebell againſt the light*; againſt the light of the knowledge of God ſhining with much evidence and clearnes, both in his word and in his workes; And then takes occaſion more particularly to deſcribe, firſt, the murderer, and his darke wayes, *ver.* 14. Secondly, the adulterer and his darke wayes, (*ver.* 15, 16, 17.)

Thirdly, *Job* ſheweth, that though the wicked do all this, and are not preſently puniſhed, yet that they are under a ſecret curſe, which ſhall ſurely overtake them (*ver.* 18, 19, 20.)

 Fourthly,

Fourthly, Upon this, he againe revives the mention of their ſinne; firſt, againſt the poor, *ver.* 21. Secondly, againſt the rich, *ver.* 22. Together with their puniſhment, though late, yet at laſt, *ver.* 23, 24.

Fifthly, He re-aſſerts all that he had ſaid, by challenging all men to diſprove him (if they could) in what he had ſaid, *ver.* 25. So much of the ſtate and generall ſcope of the whole Chapter.

Verſ. 1. *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Allmighty, doe they that know him, not ſee his dayes?*

Locus ſubdifficilis & ſolebrefas. Merc.

This (as a learned interpreter gives his opinion of it) is a hard Text, and there are various rendrings of it. I ſhall touch upon them, and then draw out that which may be ſutable for obſervation.

Firſt, The whole verſe may (as ſome conceive) be rather read thus; *Why are not times hidden from the Allmighty, ſeeing they that know him doe not ſee his dayes?* The meaning of which tranſlation is this; it might make a man that is not well inſtructed in the wayes and providences of God, to thinke that God takes no notice of the times that paſſe, nor of the things done here below, ſeeing the beſt of his ſervants could never yet make it out, that he puniſheth ungodly men according to their deeds in this world. Surely then we may ſay, That times are hidden from God, for were it not ſo, godly men could not but ſee his dayes, his judgement-dayes upon the wicked & things would not be in ſuch confuſion, and diſorder as they are. So that *Job* either ſhews what men doe ordinarily conclude from Gods indulgence and patience towards the wicked, and his ſeeming ſlacknes and ſlownes in avenging the wrongs of his owne people, even that as God is in heaven, ſo thicke clouds are a covering to him there, and that he ſeeth not what is acted on the earth. As if either the Lords eye did not reach this inferior world, or that he would not trouble himſelf about it. *Surely times are hidden from the Allmighty*, or

Secondly, that *Job* ſpeakes his owne paſſions, and temptations about this poynt; As if he had ſaid, *I am tempted to thinke that times are hidden from the Allmighty, becauſe he doth not ſend preſent releiſe to his people, nor preſent wrath upon his enemies.* Such temptations are diſcovered in other Scriptures, (*Pſal.* 73. 2.) *My feet* (ſaith

(ſaith *David*) *had almoſt ſlipt when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked*, when the wicked and unholy were not puniſhed preſently according to Juſtice, he was urged and tempted to think that God did not regard Juſtice, nor declare himſelfe in his holineſſe as he ought. And though the Prophet *Jeremiah* durſt not queſtion the righteouſneſſe of God, yet he knew not (in this caſe) how to give an account of it, as hath been noted heretofore from his queſtionings (*Jer.* 12. 1, 2.) *Why doth the way of the wicked proſper?* &c. And with this the following parts of the Chapter ſeem to carry a faire correſpondence, wherein he enumerates many groſſe practiſes and impieties of wicked men, notwithſtanding which they paſs out of this world in worldly peace.

Thirdly, One of the ancient Rabbins reads the word as a wiſh, or a deſire, *Why are not times hidden from the Allmighty?* As if he had ſaid, I could wiſh they were hidden from the Allmighty, and I could bear it better if God did take no notice of times, then that taking notice of them, he ſhould not ſet them in order, and redreſs what is amiſs; but I paſſe that.

Quare non ſunt abſcondita, q. d. æquiori animo ferem ſi eſſent abſcondita. Aben-Ezr.

Fourthly, The Latine tranſlation is poſitive, and direct; *Times are not hidden from the Allmighty, yet they that know him are ignorant of his dayes*; and the reaſon why they leave out the interrogation is given thus; becauſe they thought there was a kind of impiety, yea blaſphemy in it to ſay or querie, *Why are not times hidden from the Allmighty?* As if *Job* muſt in ſaying ſo either affirme that times were indeed hidden from the Allmighty, or that he wiſhed they were. Therefore to avoid that inconveniency they turne it into a direct negative propoſition; *Times are not hidden from the Allmighty.* And many of the Jewiſh Writers ſtumbling at the ſame ſtone, have judged *Job* as denying the providence of God, or his care of times, and ſeaſons here below; but (upon divers occaſions) *Job* hath been vindicated concerning this point, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

Ab omni potente non ſunt abſcondita tempora Vulg. *Latini videntes interrogationem blaſphemiam opinionem continere; quaſi aut abſcondita eſſe dicat aut optet, i. e. dominum temporaſy quæ hic fiunt non curare aut non videre, ſine interrogatione verterunt.* Merc.

A fifth tranſlation gives it thus; *If times are not hid by the Allmighty, how comes it to paſſe that they that know him doe not ſee his dayes?* as if he had ſaid, were it not for this, or were it not thus, that God doth hide times, or that times are hidden by God, that is, that Gods providences are carried in ſecret, and run a great while (as ſome rivers doe) as it were under-ground, it could not be, but that they that know him, that is, wiſe and holy men (as we

ſhall

shall see afterward) should see the effects, and issues of those judgements. The judgements of God (saith *Job*) are delayed in their execution or executed in so secret a way, that they are mostly and to the most of men undiscerned. Wherein he fully opposeth what *Eliphaz* said (*Chap.* 20. 16.) *They are cut down out of time*; that is, they are presently cut downe, no, sayes *Job*, God hideth their times, that is, he puts stops and delayes upon the times of his revenge; or as he speaks (*Chap.* 21. 19) *He layeth up wrath for his children, but themselves are not presently cut down.*

מדוע *cur quare. Cur a Saddai non occultata sunt tempora.*

Sixthly, Thus; *Why are not, or why should not times be hidden by the Allmighty?* so Mr. *Broughton.* As if he had said, *what reason can be given of this, why times are not hidden by the Allmighty? or why should it not be thought right, and just, that times should be hidden by the Allmighty? who can question God if he will hide times and judgements, or who shall say, it is unequall?* The Hebrew particle (*Min*) signifies as well *by* as *from*, we say, why *seeing times are not hidden from the Allmighty*; they say, *why should not times be hidden by the Allmighty?* This rendring beares a clear and a profitable sence, and therefore I shall give this observation from it.

God doth hide times from men.

The providences of God and their seasons are not carried plain to every mans eye; and why should not times be thus hidden by the Allmighty? God doth not hide that time from us wherein we ought to doe our work (he sheweth us plainly not onely what we ought to doe, but when we ought to doe it, to every worke there is an appointed time, and the present time, is our time for most workes, yea for all those workes which have a proper tendency to eternity) but though God doth not hide the times from us wherein we should doe our worke, yet he doth often hide the time from us wherein he will doe his own worke, and why should he not? he hides the time wherein he will punish the wicked, and break the power of his enemies, and he hides the time wherein he will revive his own people, and deliver the afflicted. There are some times which God keepeth, and will keep *in his owne power*; as Christ told the Disciples (Acts 1. 6, 7.) when they asked him, *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdome unto Israel? It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which God hath put in*

Insitia est mortalibus incredibilis quadam ea quæ futura sunt prænoscendi cupiditas.

in his owne power. That is, which he hath not put forth or discovered to the sonnes of men. All times are in Gods power, but those which he reserves from men, and keeps under lock and key, these he hath more especially put in his power. God will not let those times appeare to men, wherein himselfe is purposed to appeare. The time of those workes of God are wrapt up in greatest darknesse when they shall be done, which being done shine forth with greatest light; and God will have it so.

First, To reprove and stop the curiosity of man; There is nothing more naturall to man then a desire to know both what shal be hereafter, and when that hereafter shall be: we are very negligent, and carelesse in seeking out the season of that which we our selves should doe, but over-carefull and curious in seeking out the season of what God will doe. Man is given to vaine curiosity, and he is in nothing more vainly curious, then in an itch to know the times which God hath hidden from him. Most men are great questionists, and their questions mostly are about times, and seasons, when shall this, and that be? The disciples of Christ discovered this spirit more then once; When Christ had told his Disciples that of those Goodly buildings to which they admiringly poynted him, *There should not be one stone left upon another, that should not be cast downe* (Math. 24. 2.) They a while after *came unto him privately, saying, tell us, when shall these things be, and shall be the signe of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* It did not satisfie them that Christ had told them such should be, unless he also tell them the time and season when they should be. The Apostle found this humour stirring much in the Church of the *Thessalonians*, for having spoken of the resurrection of the body, and that then *the Lord himselfe shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the trump of God* (1 *Thes.* 4. 15, 16.) He, to prevent their inquisitivenesse about the time when this should be, begins the fifth Chapter thus; *But of the times and seasons brethren ye have no need that I write unto you.* Which implies, that either they had intimated such a query to him, desiring to be acquainted with the time & season of those things, or that he foresaw they would be enquiring and making it their next question, *when shall these things be?* when shall the deceased Saints be raised, and the living caught up, when shall Christ descend from heaven with a shout, &c? Some have made it

Homo est animal curiosum.

it their ſtudy to unvaile the times which God hath hid, and to uncover his ſecrets. And it is no part either of the honour or ornament of theſe times, that Aſtrologers and Mathematicians have been ſo bold in theſe ſtudies. As if the ſtarres of heaven were either betruſted with the ſecrets of the God of heaven, or being ſo would be unfaithfull Secretaryes, bewraying his ſecrets, and putting thoſe times and ſeaſons into the power of man which God hath put into his owne power. Ancient hiſtoryes tells us that the Princes of the world have been very greedy after this forbidden, or at leaſt unrevealed knowledge. Being more deſirous to know what ſhould come to paſſe in after times, then diligent in the duties of the preſent time; Whereas indeed, which is

Mathematicorum & genethliacorum vefana temeritas.

A ſecond reaſon why it is ſo, God therefore hides the iſſues and events of future times, that we might be kept to preſent duties, to the work and buſineſſe of the day. He conceals from man the preciſe day of his death, that he might every day be preparing to dye. If men had all times in their hands, they would quickly lay the greateſt and beſt part of their worke out of their hands.

Thirdly, God hideth times to try the faith of his own people, whether they can depend upon him in the darke; whether when they know not when the time ſhall be, or what a day may bring forth, they can yet freely truſt him for all their dayes. He that lives by faith at all times, troubles not himſelf about what ſhall be next in time, nor what the next times may be.

Fourthly, God hideth times, that we may be guided by rules, not by events; That we may ſteere our courſe through this world according to his divine appointments, not according to humane ſucceſſes. Upon all theſe and many more accounts, *why ſhould not times be hiaden by the Allmighty?*

But I ſhall proceed with our reading, to open that, and give ſome notes from it.

Why ſeeing times, &c.

As if *Job* had ſaid, ſeeing the Lord knoweth all times, ſeeing times are not hidden from him, what is the reaſon why thoſe who know him, and are neereſt to him, do not know times alſo? or thus; God knoweth times, they are not hidden from him, why doe not they know times that know him?

We are not to take time here nakedly or naturally as it notes dayes,

dayes, moneths, and yeares, meaſured out by the motion of the Sunne, Moone, and Starres; but time is to be conſidered providentially as cloathed with all the varieties of action and event, which are imaginable, as incident to the affayres of mankinde in this life.

Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, &c.

When *Job* ſaith, *Seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty*, his meaning is, that times are clearly and fully known to the Almighty.

The whole verſe taken together ſeemes to be a denyall of what is in it ſelf very probable; for ſeeing God knoweth times, it is moſt probable that they who know him ſhould know times too: for to whom ſhould God communicate his ſecrets, but to thoſe who are neere to him, to thoſe that are his: As if he had ſaid, *Give me a reaſon, if you can, why God, to whom all things and times are known from eternity, ſhould not make known theſe times to thoſe that know him?* And ſo the argument may be formed in this manner.

Poteſt eſſe negata connexio cauſæ probabilis cum effecto. &c.

Such as know God, ſhould know his dayes, if any know them.

But they that know God, do not know his dayes; therefore God keepes his dayes cloſe to himſelfe; ſo that whereas *Eliphaz* ſuppoſed *Job* as doubting the providence of God (*Chap.* 22. *ver* 12, 13, 14.) and asks the queſtion, *ver.* 15th, *Haſt thou marked the old way, which wicked men have troden. Job* anſwers here, I deny not the providence of God, but I deny that all the wayes of Gods dealing with wicked men, are obvious to the eye of Godly men, and ſhew me reaſon, if you can, ſeeing God knoweth all times, why the way of his judgments are ſo little viſible to them *which know him.*

But who are they that are deſcribed by this circumlocution, *They* (or the men) *that know God?* We may take them in a twofold notion.

Firſt, More Generally for all godly men, for all who are truly ſuch know God.

Secondly, More ſpecially for thoſe Godly men who know God more then others, there are ſome who have a peculiar knowledge of him, and dayly intimacy with him, who live as it were in his boſome, and ſee what is in his breaſts, comparatively to others.

And further (because words of knowledge comprehend the affections in Scripture) by those that know him much, we are to understand those that love him much, that delight in him much, that fear him much, and obey him much. Now though we may expound this text of truely Godly men at large, yet the latter sort are chiefly meant: why seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, doe not they that know him, godly men, yea his favourites, who know most of his mind, who as they are after his heart, so in his heart eminently, why doe not they who know him thus.

See his dayes?

Diem dominus appellamus cum judicium suum exercit in impios.

Whose dayes, and what dayes doth *Job* here intend? The former part of the verse answers the first question, *They are the dayes of God.* And to the second question I answer; The dayes of God are those dayes wherein he worketh, or brings forth some great worke, whether it be a worke of Judgement, or a worke of mercy. For as Times in the former part of the verse, so dayes here include the things done in those dayes, and hence Mr *Broughton* renders, *wayes not dayes. None* (saith he) *that know him see his wayes.* Whensoever God doth somewhat among men, which declares him in an eminent manner to be God, that in Scripture is called the *Day of God.* Thus the Prophet speakes (*Isa.* 2. 12.) *The day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low. And upon all the Cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up,* &c. Thus *the day of the Lord* is the day of his judgement among men. *I passe not for mans day*, or for the judgement of man, saith *Paul* (1 Cor. 4. 3. And when he saith, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13) *The day shall discover it*, He means a day of tryall will discover every mans worke, whether it be silver, gold, hay, wood, or stubble. The day of discovery, will be a glorious day of God. The Civilians have an expression which reacheth this notion of a day; They say of a man that hath had judgment in the highest Court; from whence there is no appeale; *He hath passed his last day*; that is, his highest and greatest triall, because then there is no more medling with him, or bringing the suit about again. Such are the dayes of God, of which *Job* here speaketh.

Summum ob ipse diem dicunt Jurisconsulti. vid. Bold.

Why seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, doe they that know him not see his dayes?

From

From the former part of the verse, Note.

First, *That times are knowne, perfectly known to God.*

Yea not only are times perfectly known to God, but firmely fixed and most wisely disposed of by him; men may know that which they have no power to dispose of; but the knowledge of God and his power run paralel through all times and things. So that as when the Text saith, *Times are not hidden from the Almighty*, it notes that they are fully known to him, so also that they are controuleably disposed, and ordered by him. And as times are known to God, so he makes them known when and to whom he pleaseth. When *Joseph* had revealed to *Pharoah* both the matter and the time concerned in his dreames, then (saith *Moses*, *Gen.* 41. 45) *Pharoah called Josephs name Zapnath paaneah*, which say some signifies in the Egyptian language, *The Saviour of the world*: Which name, say they, *Pharoah* might give him, because by his advise in laying up stores of corne in the yeares of plenty, such a world of men, or so great a part of the world, was saved from perishing by famine in the yeares of scarcity. But, say others deriving the word from an Hebrew roote, it signifies *a revealer of secrets.* Which title of honour *Joseph* well deserved, and was most proper to him, seeing he had revealed that Great secret unto *Pharoah*, both that there should be a famine, as also the time and season of it. But where had *Joseph* this secret? was it from any astrologicall skill of his own? He tells us plainly whence it was at the 15th and 16th verses of the same Chapter; for when *Pharoah* had said to *Joseph*; *I have heard say of thee that thou canst understand a dreame to interpret it*; He presently answers, first, Negatively, *It is not in me*; and then affirmatively, *God shall give Pharoah an answer of peace.* See the like in that most remarkeable passage (*Dan.* 2. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.) From all which we learn that God knoweth times and changeth times, that is, makes great changes in times according to the counsell of his own will.

First, If we take time, for the succession of dayes, weekes, months, years, and ages, thus the Lord knoweth times. The number of the dayes of man, the precise number of the yeares and ages wherein any worldly state or power shall continue, are not hidden from him.

Secondly, Times are not hidden from God, as times are taken

for

for the seasons and opportunities of action. The Lord knowes what time will be as a wheele or as a socket fitted for the carrying on or establishing of every worke. We are often troubled at this, and misse our season, but God knoweth every season, he knoweth the times, and therefore can time every worke exactly. And the Hebrew word here used, properly signifies a fit or a convenient time implying that time, in that notion, is not hidden from God. (*Isa.* 50. 4) *God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I might speake a word in season to him that is weary.* Which some translate thus, *That I might know the appointed time to the afflicted.* An afflicted soul must be watched, and a season taken; these times are not hidden from the Almighty, he knoweth the opportunity, and therefore can direct him that speakes to a wearyed soul, as to speake proper and taking matter, so to speake it in a proper and taking time, when it shall be as welcome to the soule as raine to the dry and thirsty ground. *David* saith the Lord (*Psal.* 119. 23.) *It is time Lord for thee to worke for they have made voyd thy Law*; that is, now is thy season, and opportunity for thee to work, if ever thou wilt shew thy self doe it now. And when *David* confessed (*Psal.* 31. 15.) *My times are in thy hand.* He means that the seasons of his comforts, and of his sorrowes, all the turnings and changes of his life from one condition to another, were cast and ordered by the power and wisdome of God. *Why seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty,*

עת denotat congruum tempus.

Per tempora intelligit rerum vicissitudines: dicit ut et pauperie et pacem et bellum &c. Theodoret.

Doe they that know him, not see his dayes.

Thus *Job* describes the persons that see not the dayes of God; they are such as *know him.* Which character, as was shewed before, belongs to every Godly man, though it be more peculiar to some.

Hence note

First, *Every Godly man knoweth God.*

And none but the Godly know him indeed; many ungodly men profess they know God, and they may know him notionally, but no ungodly man knoweth him truly, experimentally, or practically. Many ungodly men *have a forme of knowledge, and of the truth in the Law* (as the Apostle speakes of the Jewes. *Rom.* 2. 20.) but no ungodly man feeleth the power of knowledge, and of

of the truth in the Law. And therefore the wicked are spoken of in Scripture, as not knowing God (*Jere.* 10. 25.) *Powre out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not.* And when the Prophet describes the wickednesse of the Jewish State, he saith (*Hos.* 4. 1) *There is no knowledge of God in the Land.* Which the Chalde Paraphrast renders thus; *Neither are there any who walke in the fear of God in the land*; where there is no knowledge of God, there is no feare of God. We neither love nor feare him of whom we have no knowledge, nor can we beleeve in or trust him, whom we know not. (*Psal.* 9. 10) *They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee*; That is, the truly godly will trust in thee, for they know thy name, but they that know thee not, how can they trust upon thee? and therefore the Prophet calls us to boast in, the knowledge of God. (*Jere.* 9. 23.) *Thus sayth the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdome, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindnesse, judgment, and righteousnesse in the earth, for in these things I delight sayth the Lord.* There is nothing in this world worth the boasting in, but the holy knowledge of a holy God, or such a knowledge of God, the fruit whereof is a godly life here, and the end whereof is an eternal life hereafter. *Joh.* 17. 3. *This is eternal life that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* This knowledge of God doth not floate in the Braine, but sinkes into the heart, and is rooted in the affections. Thus the Apostle *John* argues (1 *Epist. Chap.* 2. *v.* 3, 4, 5, 6.) *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keepe his commandements, he that sayth he knows him, and keepeth not his commandement is a liar, and the truth is not in him*; As if he had said, The true knowledge of God is an obedientiall knowledg, so that if any man saith he knoweth God, while his life is not suitable to what he knoweth, this mans profession is vaine, and himself is a lyar; *Whosoever keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected*, that is, he loveth God with a perfect or sincere love, and the love of God is perfected towards him. The scope of his whole discourse there is to shew that the true knowledg of God is the keeping of the word of God. Many are so ignorant of God, that they know not the word which they should keepe, and all they who knowing the word keepe it not,

Pietas est cognitio scientiaque dei. Trismeg.

not, will at laſt be numbred among the ignorant, or among thoſe that know not God: But their condition will be worſe, and their puniſhment greater then theirs who never knew God according to the teachings of his word. Their eſtate will be bad enough, who periſh for want of the knowledge of God, then, what will their end be, who periſh in the neglect or abuſe of plentiful knowledge!

From the ſecond notion of the words, *they that know him*, as they intimate a ſort of Godly men, who have neerer acquaintance with, and freer acceſſe to God then others.

Obſerve.

That as all godly men know God, which the wicked doe not, ſo ſome godly men have ſuch a knowledge of God as many who are godly have not.

Though the knowledge of all godly men be of the ſame nature and kinde, yet not of the ſame degree and height. We read of ſome who in old time were called *Seers* (1 *Sam.* 9. 9) as if they onely had been endued with ſight, and all others were blinde in the things of God. They were the only *ſeers*, yea they *were foreſeers*, becauſe God did often reveale himſelfe, and declare to them what he was about to do in dreames and viſions. Now as in thoſe times there were ſome men called *ſeers*, ſo in theſe times ſome may be called *knowers*, as if none knew any thing of God comparatively to them, or as if other godly men were ignorant and underſtood nothing of him. When God (1 *Sam.* 3) appeared to *Samuel* in a viſion, and revealed the doom of *Elies* houſe to him; the Text ſayth, at the 7th verſe, *Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord*; ſurely *Samuel* did know the Lord as other godly did in thoſe times, though he were but young; yea it is ſaid, *The Childe Samuel miniſtred before the Lord*, and did not he know the Lord? no doubt he did. The meaning therefore is, *Samuel* did not yet know the Lord by any ſpeciall intimacy with him, or particular revelation from him, as afterward he did; he became *a knower of* God at laſt, though then *he did not know God*, in this peculiar ſence. But God having revealed to him the ſecret what he would doe to *Elies* houſe, then he knew God, he knew him as a favourite, that is truſted with ſecrets. So *David* ſpeakes (*Pſal.* 25. 14.) *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him.* There is a ſecret in the

the plaineſt truths and doctrines of Godlineſſe, both in Law and Goſpel; and many know the doctrine, who know not the ſecret; any common profeſſor may know the doctrine, but the ſincere onely know the ſecret, that is, the power and efficacy, the ſweetnes of comfort of the doctrine. There is alſo a ſecret of God with his in bleſſing and proſpering them in the world; of which *Job* ſpeakes (*Chap.* 29. 4.) as there is alſo a ſecret and imperceptible curſe, which the prophet calls the Lords blowing upon what men have in their poſſeſſion, or for their uſe (*Hag.* 1. 9.) But beſides theſe there is a ſecret of favour, which is the ſealing of the Spirit, the gift of the hidden Manna, and of the white ſtone, with a new name in it, which no man knoweth ſaving he that receiveth it: (*Rev.* 2. 17.) This ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and there is yet another ſecret of his with them, even the ſecret of his purpoſe and intendment concerning his own providentiall workings. Which while many or all ſee, yet they know not the meaning of them, I mean it not only of the wicked and carnall, but even of many who are holy and ſpirituall in the maine. The ſecrets of providence are known only to ſome choyce ones, to ſome of an excellent ſpirit and high attainments, to ſome *Abrahams*, &c. intimate friends, who are to God as his own ſeule. There is a ſecret of the Lord, which is with all them that feare him, yet ſome of his ſecrets are not with many of them who feare him. What *Job* ſpake in the 12th Chapter of this Booke, *ver.* 2. reproving the pride of his friends; *Yee are the men and wiſdome ſhall dye with you*; you (I trow) have ingroſſed all wiſdome, and others muſt borrow of you; The ſame we may ſpeak ſoberly and approvingly of ſome humble Godly men *they have the knowledge of God*, and it is but little that others have, though they have a ſaving knowledge. Some conceive the Prophet upbraiding the Jewes (*Iſa.* 58. 2.) As if they affected to be looked upon, not only as ſuch as know God, but as ſuch as know him intimately, and were his boſome friends. *They ſeeke me dayly and delight to know my wayes, as a nation that did righteouſneſſe, and forſooke not the ordinance of their God, they aske of me the Ordinances of Juſtice, they take delight in approaching unto God.* They who doe indeed, as theſe *Jewes* ſeemed to doe, may be numbred among thoſe of the higheſt forme that know God. *Why doe they that know him, not ſee his dayes.*

Here

Here *Job* hath found out ſomewhat knowable, which they who know God, doe not alwayes know; and that is, as hath been ſhewed, the ſeaſon of his judgments.

Hence Note.

First, *The judgments of God are often either deferred, carried ſo cloſely, and ſecretly, that the wiſeſt and holyeſt men cannot alwayes diſcern or ſee them.*

The judgements of God are often deferred in this life, and they are very often concealed, though preſently executed. That is not alwayes true which *Eliphaz* aſſerted (*Chap.* 22. 19) *The righteous ſee it and are glad, the innocent laugh them to ſcorn.* The righteous ſomtimes ſee the judgments of God upon wicked men, and his care watching over themſelves, but they doe not always ſee either; for as a wicked man may doe evil an hundred times, that is, very often, and goe unpuniſhed, as is intimated (*Eccl.* 8. 12.) So a wicked man may be puniſhed an hundred times, and yet not one of his puniſhments ſeene. Some judgments of God are great and ſore, which yet fall not under the obſervation of the beſt, of the wiſeſt, of the holieſt in the world; *They that know him, doe not ſee his dayes*, God (for terror and warning to others) doth judgement upon ſome openly (*Deut.* 7. 9, 10.) *Know therefore the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithfull God, who keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keepe his commandements to a thouſand generations, and repayeth them that hate him, to their face to deſtroy them; He will not be ſlack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.* Here are two things in this Text concerning the judgments of God; That they ſhall come, firſt, ſuddenly; ſecondly, openly; they ſhall come ſuddenly, *God will not be ſlack*, they ſhall come openly, *God will repay them to their face*, as they ſinned openly, ſo they ſhall be puniſhed openly. Thus God repayd the *Sodomites*, he payd them to their face, ſo he repayd *Pharoah*, and ſo the rebelling *Jewes*; and *he was not ſlack*, (for as the Pſalmiſt ſaith) *while the meate was in their mouth, the wrath of God fell upon them.* Thus 'tis ſometimes: yet judgments are often deferred, and hidden. What the Apoſtle ſpeakes (*Rom.* 9 22.) is applicable here; *God willing to ſhew his wrath, and make his power known, indured with much long ſuffering the veſſells of wrath fitted for deſtruction*; there are veſſells of wrath fitted for deſtruction, thrown to hell, not onely to a temporall, but to an eternall deſtruction,

ſtruction; yet God did endure them with much long-ſuffering; that is, he did not preſently powre out wrath upon them, he was ſo far from caſting them preſently to hell, that he did not afflict them with any trouble in this life, but indured them with much long ſuffering, & patience. *David* was much aſtoniſhed with this conſideration (*Pſal.* 36. 6.) *Thy righteouſneſſe is like the great mountaines, thy judgements are a great deepe.* Take both together; *Thy righteouſneſſe is like the great mountains, the mountains of God*, that is, thy righteouſneſſe indures, and remains inviolable. But though it be ſo, yet the execution and actings of thy righteouſneſſe are not alwayes decerneable, *for thy judgements are a great deep*; that is, when God doth execute, and put forth his righteouſneſſe, few ſee it, his *judgements are a great deep*, many deeps, who can go to the depth of them? *how unſearchable are thy judgements?* ſaith the Apoſtle, (*Rom.* 11. 33.) they are ſuch & ſo deep that none can reach the bottome of them; and therefore no wonder if *they are ſometimes hidden from thoſe that know God.*

Secondly, Whereas *Job* ſaith *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, doe they that know him, not ſee his dayes?*

We may Note.

That, *if any thing which God doth in this world be ſeene by any, Godly men are in the Greateſt likelyhood to ſee it.*

And that upon a twofold ground; firſt, becauſe they have the beſt eyes, and ſences moſt exerciſed to diſcerne what God is doing. And as this is, becauſe they have the beſt internall light, and pureſt principles to make this diſcovery with; So in the ſecond place, becauſe they ſtand fairеſt in the eye of God, to have his providences manifeſted and expounded to them. For as God by the Spirit expounds his word, ſo his workes to his choiceſt ſervants. *Shall I hide from Abraham* (ſaid God, *Gen.* 18 17) *that thing which I doe.* And ſo the Lord ſaith to the ſpirituall children of *Abraham* unto this day, Shall I hide from them either what I am about to doe, or the meaning and ſcope of what I have done? If any in the world ſee the dayes of God, Saints ſhall. So that we may conclude, if they ſee them not, that either they are not yet come, or that God purpoſely concealed their coming. Both or either of which may be the minde of *Job* in this place.

Lastly, Consider the text as a question, *Why seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, doe they that know him, not see his dayes?* What is the reason of this? *Job* here answers *Eliphaz*, who thought that the judgments of God were ever open, and obvious to all beholders; but as it is not so, so what is the reason of this? why is it not so? I have heretofore given an account of these *whyes and wherefores* of these questions about the dispensations of God. Yet here I answer further, God is pleased to cover or defer his Judgement dayes. First, because it is his pleasure to doe so, that's answer enough for man, it is his pleasure. Times are not hidden from God, but must he needs make us acquainted with all times, or shew us the way of his judgements presently no, it is his pleasure to doe otherwise, and it is his priviledge to dispose of times, seasons, actions, and judgements as he pleaseth who may say to him, what dost thou? or why dost thou so? he is supream, and soveraigne, if he will have it so, why should any one oppose it, or rise up against it?

Secondly, If it be demanded, Why are not the wicked presently punished, seeing God knoweth times, and seasons, and how all things passe among the sons of men? I answer, God will leave wicked men more inexcusable, the more patience is exercised towards them, the more long-suffering God is to them, the more evident will the justice of God be in their sufferings, and they will have the lesse, or rather nothing at all to plead for themselves. The least sin committed by man may stop his mouth, how much soever he is punished by God; how much more may their mouths be stopped, who continued to sin greatly, while God continued to spare them long in their sin?

Thirdly, The day of the wicked mans suffering comes not suddainly, that the patience of the Saints may be tryed, and exercised. There are three things which chiefly exercise the patience of the Saints. First, the Greatnes of their own troubles: Secondly, the slownes of their deliverance out of trouble: Thirdly, the long prosperity of wicked men, or the long deferring of their punishment. These delayes and stops in the vindicative administrations of God *towards evill men*, give the graces of his servants present worke, and God often forbears purposely to put forth his power, that Saints may put forth their patience, or that it may be said of them as in the booke of the Revelations, *Here is the patience of the Saints*, in this the patience of the Saints is visible. Faith and patience can never have so fit an opportunity to be seen, as when the Justice of God in avenging them, and in punishing the wicked is least seene. Yea therefore it is that they do not see those his dayes with an eye of sense, that they might see them with an eye of faith. While the Prophet saith (*Hab.* 2. 4.) *The just shall live by his faith*; He speakes in reference to the deferring and delaying of judgements upon the enemies of the Church; as appeares fully in the first Chapter (*ver.* 12, 13.) *O Lord, thou hast ordained them* (namely, the Chaldean Empire) *for Judgement*, (that is, to punish and afflict thy Church, the Jewish Nation) *and O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction*; As if he had said, *Thou O Lord, didst not intend the ruine and destruction of thy people, by arming and sending this bitter and hasty Nation against them, but onely their amendment and repentance; yea thou hast no pleasure at all in these Chaldeans, by whom thou hast powred out thy displeasure upon thine own people.* For, as it follows; *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evill, and canst not looke on iniquity, to approve of it, or to be pleased with it, and seeing thou canst not; wherefore lookest thou upon them that deale treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man, that is more righteous then he?* That is, why dost not thou O Lord take vengeance speedily upon these evill and treacherous ones? The Prophet having proposed & urged this question to the Lord, What doth he next? you may see that at the first verse of the second Chapter; *I will stand upon the watch and set me upon the tower, and I will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved*, or (as the Hebrew hath it) argued with, by carnall men, or the turbulent passions of my own spirit? The Lord giveth him his answer at large (*ver.* 2, 3.) which is summed up (*v.* 4.) in this brief direction or assertion, *But the just shall live by his faith.* As if he had said, proud men will be querying, yea quarrelling, when they see my providences crosse my promises, or my workes carrying a present face of unsuitablenes to my word. When things goe thus, they are presently offended & nonplus'd, they know not what to make of it, unless it be to make me *a lyar*, as speaking, what I meant not to do, or *impotent*, as speaking more then I had ability to do; But, my people know how to satisfie these doubts with a saving to my

honour; *The just shall live by his faith.* And they who live by faith will not have uncomely thoughts of me, whatsoever it is that appeares to their sight: or though that which they hoped would appeare be still kept out of their sight. Though, *they that know him see not his dayes*, with an eye of sence, yet they see them by an eye of faith, and *by that faith they live.*

So then the reason why they who know God, or the Godly, see not his dayes, is not because God is not able to bring a day of vengeance upon wicked men, it is not because he beares any good will to them, but to exercise the faith and patience of his people. That's the scope of this first verse, which layeth down the proposition by way of question, times are not unknowne to God, yet they that know him doe not see his dayes, his judgement dayes as *Eliphaz* had before asserted. In the next part of the Chapter, *Job* goes on to prove by an enumeration of particulars, that many sorts of wicked men goe on in all sorts of sinne, who yet feel not the day of God upon them.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 24. Verf. 2, 3, 4.

Some remove the Land-markes, they violently take away the flocks, and feed thereof.
They drive away the asse of the fatherlesse, they take the widows Ox for a pledge.
They turne the needy out of the way, the poore of the earth hide themselves together.

IN the first verse of this Chapter, it was shewed that they who know God, that is godly men doe not in this world see his dayes, that is, the dayes of his judgement, and vengeance upon the wicked. In the following part of this Chapter, *Job* proceeds to describe wicked men, in several acts of wickednesse, and how they carry it on, and have many faire dayes in the world, while they are doing fowle, and filthy worke. They doe as much mischiefe as they can, and they enjoy as much outward prosperity, as they can desire to have, or tell what to doe with it, when they have it; so that they seeme equally to abound in the practice of evill, and in the possession of Good. See what havocke they make, in the words of this context.

Verf. 2. *Some remove the Land-marks, they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.*

Some remove] Of whom *Job* spake in particular, or of what particular time he spake is uncertaine. Some referre it to the dayes before the Floud, for that was a time wherein the world was filled with violence, and that was the speciall sin of that age, set forth (*Gen.* 6. 11.) *The earth also was corrupt before God*; That is, men dwelling upon the earth, were corrupt, morally corrupt, corrupt in their manners. Thus, *the earth was corrupt before God*, and, he shews wherein that corruption did consist, *and the earth was filled with violence.* But as the character which *Job* gives of these men, may wel suite those times: so what times have not produced such a sort of men? And though some times have been more tainted with, and notorious for those sins then others, yet all times have

Been

been tainted with them, and therefore we may take the words generally as applicable to any age of the world.

Some remove the Land-marks.

That is, those marks which are set up for the distinction, or division of Lands, that every man may know his own, and not entrench upon his neighbours inheritance. These Land-marks, or bounds they remove. The Hebrew is, *they touch*, so 'tis translated, *some touch the Land-marks*; Land-marks were sacred things; they ought not to be touched, nor medled with. The Lord speaks of his holy people (*Psal.* 105. 15.) *Touch not mine anointed, and doe my Prophets no harme.* Another word is used in the *Psalme*, but we may give the same emphasis here, *some touch the Land-marks*, as if it were a fault so much as to handle, or medle with them: yet the word here used signifies both to touch, and to take, and so to take, as violently to carry away. (*Zech.* 1. 6.) *Did not my word take hold of your fathers*; that is, did it not apprehend, and seaze upon them, yea remove them out of the land of the living. Where the word of God toucheth, it taketh away, either to destruction or salvation. And that word in the Prophet hath a double allusion, either to the hunting of beasts, or to fighting, & contending with men the word followed your fathers, it overtooke them, it tooke them, it laid hold on them, as the hunter layeth hold upon his prey, or as an enemy follows, and over-takes a fleeing enemy, *did not my word take hold of your fathers?* yes, it did, and that to purpose. The word is used (*Psal.* 40. 12.) *Mine iniquities* (saith *David*) *take hold of me, so that I am not able to looke up*; they have dealt with me, as with a fugitive, that runneth away; They have taken hold of me, and they hold me fast, my sin hath apprehended me. So that, though this originall word signifies *to touch*, yet it is so to touch as to offer violence, to take away, to remove, as is expressed in those instances (1 *Sam.* 30. 8.) *David inquired of the Lord, saying, shall I pursue after this troope, shall I over-take them*; so (2 *Sam.* 15. 14.) *David said to all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, arise let us flee, for we shall not escape from Absolom, make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly.* In which places as this word is used, so the use of it is about violent and forcible acting, so that this touching is taking or removing; they *remove* or *pull* up the Land-marks, to set them

Intelligit apprehendit vis verbi ea est ut ita res attingatur quod apprehendatur pertinet ad vim potentioris manus injicientis.

them in some other place for their own advantage. This was their first sin, the removing of *Land-marks*; which was upon the matter to take away propriety, and to put all men out of possession. There can be no possession without distinction; naturall riches consist in lands and cattle, and both bear their owners mark. The care & industry of the ancients was exceeding great and accurate about their land-marks, both in setting them up, and in observing them, that every man might have his owne; wherefore to remove the land-marks, was indeed to take away the land.

Mira fuit in antiquis tum in constituendis tum in servandis limitibus fides atq; religio.

Hence note.

That, *God hath given unto man a proper, speciall, and personall right in his lands, and goods.*

If it were not so, then, first, it were no sin to remove land-marks, or a vain thing to set them up if there be no distinction of inheritances by propriety, what needs there be any distinction, by marks, or limits, to shew, this is such a mans land, and that anothers. No man may set a speciall mark, where he hath not a speciall right. Secondly, if there were no propriety, there could not be such a sin as stealing, and theeving: that which is every mans, any man may take, and be blamelesse. Thirdly, if there were not propriety, there would be but little industry; If mens lands and goods were not their owne, who would be found to take care of them, or paines about them. Fourthly, to make all things common, were to run all into confusion. There is nothing more unequal then this kind of equality. If all had a like right in the things of the world, all would think to have a like power in the government of the world. *Propriety and Magistracy must stand & fall together.*

But some may object that practice of the primitive Church (*Acts* 2. 44.) who had all things common. And if all things with them were in a community, where was propriety?

I answer, First, This practice of theirs was purely voluntary, not at all imposed; as appeares plainely from the words of *Peter* to *Ananias* (*Acts* 5. 4.) *While it remained, was it not thine owne?* or more close to the Greek *Remaining did it not remain to thee*; that is, it was properly thine before thou soldest it, and thou mightest have kept thy interest in it. No man compelled thee to sel or give and if thou hadst not sold it, thou mightest still have held communion

nion with the Church for a Ichar; But this is thy ſin, to pretend the gift of all to God, and performe but in part.

Obſerve, Secondly, That community did not extend to the whole eſtate of all beleevers, but to what they did conſecrate to relieve the publick neceſſity. For if they had put themſelves quite out of all propriety by one gift, they cou'd not have exercised their charity any more. Whereas the Apoſtle directs them to a conſtant uſe of their charity in making collections for the poore (*1 Cor.* 16. 1, 2.) And ſurely *Paul* had made a vaine profeſſion when he ſaid; *I have coveted no mans ſilver, or Gold, or apparell,* (*Acts* 20. 23.) if no man had any peculiar propriety in gold, ſilver, or apparel.

Thirdly, It appeares from the 44th verſe, that even they who ſold their goods retained ſome kind of righ. in them; for all did not come to the common banke, and take what they pleaſed; but they who ſold their poſſeſſions parted the price to all men, allotting to every one a proportion as he had need. It was not ſhare and ſhare like, every man was not his own carver out of the publicke ſtocke, but diſtribution was made, as neceſſity required God doth to this day keepe the eighth commandement in full force and ſtrength, as a Fence or hedge about the worldly eſtates of men, and he that goes about to breake this Hedge, a Serpent ſhall bite him, as *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Ecc.* 10.8.) Hedges are Land marks; And both are, not onely arguments, but ſecurers of propriety.

Againe, Seeing Land markes were ſet up to diſtinguiſh mens eſtates.

We learne.

That we ſhould uſe all due means to prevent contentions about worldly poſſeſſions.

As every man hath a title and right to his own, ſo every man ſhould have a rule whereby to know his owne; peace is a ſacred and precious thing (even peace about civill things) and therefore whatſoever makes for peace ſhould be accounted ſacred and precious. Bleſſed are the peace makers, but more bleſſed are the peace-preſervers. It is good to heale breaches among Brethren, but it is better when there are none. Preventing phyſick is more deſireable then reſtoring.

Thirdly

Thirdly, Note;

To remove Land marks, which are the meanes of preſerving the poſſeſſions of men diſtinct, and ſo of preſerving their right and peace, is very ſinfull.

This is a ſin condemned by the light of nature, as well as by the light of Scripture; Hiſtories report how ſtrict the ancient *Romans* were againſt ſuch offenders; as they were accurate in ſetting up bounds, ſo they were ſevere to puniſh thoſe, who removed, and diſturbed the bounds; it was lawfull by their law to take away the life of him who took away his neighbours land mark. And if any man in tilling the ground, plowed up the land-marke, himſelfe and his oxe were both facred, that is, both were to be ſlain or devoted to death; yet the *Romans* were ſo intent, and devout about this thing, that they had a ſpeciall god *of the bounds or limits ſtones.* And as the old heathens, judging by the rule of common reaſon, and light of nature, did abhorre this practice, ſo the holy Scripture in the Law of *Moſes* provides directly and by name againſt it. (*Deut.* 19. 14.) *Thou ſhalt not remove thy neighbours land-marke which they of old times ſet, in thine inheritance, which thou ſhalt inherit, in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to poſſeſſe it.* And againe (*Deut.* 27. 17.) *Curſed be he that removeth his neighbours land marke, and all the people ſhall ſay Amen.* A *curſe* containes all penalties, and *Amen* ſeales them all upon the perſon of the offender. *Solomon* renewed theſe lawes (*Prov.* 22. 28.) *Remove not thy neighbours land marke, which thy fathers have ſet.* And againe (*Pro.* 23. 10.) *Remove not the old land-marks, and enter not into the field of the fatherleſſe.* Thus *Solomon* caution'd thoſe times againſt this ſin. And the Prophet (*Hoſea* 5. 10.) makes this ſinne as the Standard of all other ſins, or as that by which we are to take the greatneſſe and weight of any ſinne; if a ſinne comes neere to this, or be like this, 'tis a great ſin. *The Princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound, therefore I will powre out my wrath upon them like water*; As if he had ſaid, the Princes of *Judah* are extreamely wicked: how wicked? even as wicked as they which remove the bound. Now if high-growne wickedneſſe be but ſuch a thing as removing the bound, how high is their wickedneſſe grown, who remove the bound? But it may be demanded what bound doth the Prophet meane? I anſwer,

Mama pupilli ne ſi ſtatim ut liceret eam vendere quam facile ei occidere qui vicinus, jus termini anjus eſſet. Etiam qui terminum exaraſſet, ipſum & boum jacros eſſe. i e. Ferro devotos. Feſtus.

Numa lapides ſacravit Jovi Terminali.

ſwer, it may be underſtood of all ſorts of bounds, of the bounds of lawes, of the bounds of liberty, of the bounds of religion, as alſo of the bounds of lands. It is wickedneſs to medle with or remove any of theſe bounds, though to remove ſome of them be a greater wickednesse. To remove the bounds of the laws, and the liberties of a Nation, eſpecially to remove the bounds of religion, are hainous abominations; and though to remove the bound of Lands, be not ſo bad as theſe, yet that alſo may be numbred among the abominations which both God and man hate, & therefore when the Prophet would in one word ſpeak all the abominable practices of the Princes of *Judah*, he chooſe to ſay, they are like thoſe who remove the bound; implying, that nothing could be ſaid of them worſe then that. The ſame Prophet uſeth an expreſſion ſomewhat paralel to that (*Hoſea* 4. 4.) where deſcribing the wickedneſſe of thoſe times, he tells them, that *the Lord had a controverſi with the Land, becauſe there was no truth, no mercy, no knowledge of God in the Land, by ſwearing, and lying, and killing, and ſtealing*, &c. then at the 4. verſe he concludes, *Let no man ſtrive and reprove another.* ('Tis the ſoareſt judgement of God upon a people or a perſon to let them alone and be quiet in their ſinne, to ſay, *Let no man ſtrive, and reprove another*) but why did God give up that people to ſuch a judgement? The greatneſſe of their ſin was the cauſe of it; And what was that? the next words ſhew us; *For thy people are as they that ſtrive with the Prieſt.* It was ſo great a wickedneſſe to contend or *ſtrive with the Prieſt*, that the vileſt of wickednesſes was but an exemplification of it. God forbids that they ſhould be reproved or ſtriven with for good, who were once grown ſo evill as to ſtrive with the Prieſt; and the greateſt reproofe that can poſſibly be given any man, is to ſay, *let no man reprove him.* Thus we ſee that to *ſtrive with the Prieſt, and to remove the bound*, are ſins of the firſt magnitude, the one in Spiritualls, the other in Civills.

Fourthly, In as much as the word here uſed ſignifies not only quite to remove, but to touch or medle with the Land-marks.

Obſerve.

That we ought to avoid all thoſe acts, that are leading to ſin, as well as the ſin it ſelfe.

It was not abſolutely a ſinne, or a ſinne in it ſelfe, to touch or come

come neer the Land-markes, but becauſe this had an appearance of evill in it, and becauſe while men handled the bounds, either it might come into their minds to remove them, or they might poſſibly remove them a little againſt their minds, therefore even that act is forbidden, as having in it a tendency to that ſin. It is good for us to keepe at the furtheſt diſtance we can from that which is evill. The Apoſtles rule is, *Abſtain from all appearance of evill*, (1 Theſ. 5. 22.) unleſſe all the appearances of all the approaches unto evill be abſtained from, we ſhall hardly abſtaine from the evill it ſelf. *Solomon* gives a like caution (*Pro.* 23. 31.) *Looke not upon the Wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth it ſelfe aright.* It is not a ſinne to looke upon the wine, yet *Solomon* ſaith, *looke not upon it*; why? becauſe that act may occaſion another; while you look upon the wine, you may be taken with the beauty and colour of it, and ſo drink intemperately; for he adds, *it will bite like a Serpent*; which implyes that looking may enſnare a man, and cauſe him to drinke more then he ought, and then the wine will bite indeed; wine will goe down without chewing, but he that lets too much goe down ſhall find it biting. And 'tis more dangerous and venemous to be wine-bitten, then to be ſerpent-bitten; therefore look not upon the wine. So here, touch not the Land-marks, be not buſie about them, ſtand off from them, leſt you be enticed to remove or take them away; *They that will alwayes doe the utmoſt of what is lawfull, may ſoon be overcome to doe that which is unlawfull.* It is our wiſdome as well as our duty, not to touch that, which to take away will be our ſin.

Laſtly, When *Job* ſaith, *Some remove the Land-marks*; that is not the onely thing intended, though it be onely here expreſſed; for this removing had a further purpoſe: as touching comes to removing, ſo removing the Land-marks goeth further, even to the taking away of the Land. And they therefore tooke away the Land-marks, that they might take away the Land alſo; they took away that which diſtinguiſhed their lands from other mens lands, that ſo others mens lands might be accounted theirs, & that they might enter upon the poſſeſſion of them as their owne. Thus, to colour and cover their covetouſneſs and oppreſſion in invading other mens lands they removed the marks whereby they held & claimed their lands. It were not worth the while to remove land-

markes, unlesse it were for the lands sake. The value of a stone, or of a peice of timber, or of a Turfe of earth (any of which may be made a land-marke) is not considerable, but the land marked by it, is. The heart of man is cunning and full of contrivance to compasse sinfull ends by such wayes, as may keep the sin (as much as may be) unseene. Forceably to take away lands were grosse, but first to take away land-marks, and so to raise a question, or make it a controversie to whom the Land belongs, this is a peice of oppression spun with a finer threed. This is robbing without seeming to do wrong. *Some remove the Land-marres,*

They violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.

גזל rapinam, ex hominem est extorquendi illud dirigendi verbum, denotans violentiam vim facere et vi extorquere.

These words contain the second act of their wickednes. Before we land stoln, now cattel, *they violently take away.* The word notes a fierce violence. As 'tis said of one of *Davids* Worthies (2 *Sam.* 23. 21.) *He slew an Ægyptian, a goodly man, and the Ægyptian had a spear in his hand, but he went down to him with a staffe, and plucke the spear out of the Ægyptians hand.* He plucke it from him by strength of hand, or by fine force. Thus here, *They take or pluck away flocks.* There are two wayes of taking away what belongs to another. First, secretly, or by fraud; secondly, openly, or by violence. Both are forbidden (*Lev.* 19. 13.) *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour,* (that is, thou shalt not take away his goods secretly by deceit and cunning) *neither shalt thou rob him;* he that cozens or deceives another, robs him; but in that law of *Moses*, by robing is meant violent taking away. There are some private theeves, so are all they who defraud their brethren. others are bold and open theeves, these properly are robbers, Might overcomes right. Of such *Job* speaks here.

They violently take away flocks.

עדר est collectio animalium, tam minorum, ut ovium, caprarum, tum majorum ut bovum vaccarum.

A flock is a collection of cattell, lesse, or great sheep, or oxen, they make prey of all, *they take away flocks.* See the greedinesse of these robbers. Any one flock containes many cattel, these took away many flocks, or many a flock; and that violently, they had no law for it, and they asked no leave for it.

Hence note.

Where the rule of what is done is the will of the doer, any thing is done which he hath a power to do, whether right or wrong, makes no matter.

I will

I will have it, saith he; and if he be strong enough have it he will. The Prophet *Amos* gives such a character of the Princes of those times (*Chap.* 3. 10.) *They know not to doe right, saith the Lord, who store up violence and robbery in their pallaces.* 'Tis sad for a people when Princes or *they who dwell in Pallaces, know not to do right*, especially when their *know not*, is not, an Ignorance of the Law, but a willfull perversion of the Law; when their *know not to doe right*, is they have no mind nor will to do right; when Princes *are wise* (enough, too wise) *to doe evill, but to doe good they have no knowledge*; such were they of whom the Prophet complained in that place, *they know not to doe right.* And what are such like to doe then? The Prophet tells us what; *They store up violence and robbery in their palaces*; that is, all the furniture & riches of their pallaces, are but robberry & violence, or such things as they have taken away by violence, and roberry. The Lord therefore threatens such, that they shall be scourged with violence, (Ezek. 7. 11.) *Violence is risen up into a rod of wickednesse, none of them shall remaine, nor of their multitude, nor any of theirs, neither shall there be wayling for them.* Violence riseth up to a rod of wickednesse two wayes. First, as violence shootes or puts forth from wickednesse, as a branch or rod shootes forth from the stocke of a tree; all the violence and oppression that ever was committed in the world, is both branch and fruit growing or rising up from a wicked heart. Secondly, Violence riseth up into a rod of wickednes, when violence punisheth wickednesse; they who have afflicted others by violence, often find violence turned into a rod to afflict themselves. And we may give that sence of *Solomons* Proverbs; (*Pro.* 13. 2.) *The soule of the transgressour shall eate violence.* The words are a threat. As wicked men eate violence, that is, what they have gotten by violence; so they shall have violence to eate, that is, they shall be violently dealt with; either violence shall compell them to doe their duty, or violence shall punish them for not doing it, or as they lived by violence, so they shal die by violence. *The soules of transgressours shall eat violence*, as a punishment, because (as it follows in the next claule) they eate violence as their portion. *They violently take away flocks,*

And feed thereof.

The Originall words are rendred two wayes. First, as we, *They*

feed.

feede thereof; that is, they feed themſelves with the flocks which they have taken away; Secondly, *They fed them*; that is, they feed the flocks which they have violently taken away. According to our tranſlation the ſence is this, when they have taken away flocks violently, they ſit downe quietly and feed themſelves with theſe flocks, they and their families are maintained by the ſpoyle. And I conceive *Job* adds this, not onely to ſhew another or a ſecond act of their ſin, but to ſhew the reſolvedneſſe and ſetledneſſe of theſe men in the wayes of ſin.

Hence note.

Then a wicked man is hardned in ſin, when he feeds, and filleth himſelfe with what he hath ſinfully gotten.

They not onely act evill, but delight in evill, who *take away any thing by violence, and feede thereon. Solomon* ſpeakes of ſome (*Pro.* 4. 17.) *Who eate the bread of wickednes* (that is, bread (by which is meant all the neceſſaryes of this life) gotten by wickedneſſe) *and they drinke the wine of violence*; that is, the wine which they have gained by violence, or ſuppoſe what they have violently gained be not wine, in ſpecie, or that liquor which we call wine, yet they drinke it as wine, like ſweet and pleaſant wine. This is a ſigne of a heart ſetled in ſin, when the ſinner eates his ſinne as bread, and drinks it as wine. What ſtomacks have they who can digeſt ſuch hard meats; and though now they ſeeme to make a good digeſtion of it, yet unleſſe they vomit up ſuch morſels and draughts by true repentance, they will lye heavie upon their ſtomacks, and make them heart-ſick to Eternity. The Prophet threatens (*Iſa.* 3. 14.) *That the Lord will enter into judgement with the ancients of his people, and the Princes thereof, for* (ſaith he) *ye have eaten up the vineyard, the ſpoile of the poor is in your houſes*; that is, ye maintaine your houſes by that which is not yours, even by the ſpoiles and vineyards of the poor. When *Jezabel* had got *Naboth* ſlaine, ſhe preſently ſaid to *Ahab*, *Ariſe, take poſſeſſion of the vineyard of Naboth*, and *Ahab* did ſo (1 *Kings* 21. 15, 16.) But the Lord ſent *Eliah* to him with this Meſſage (*ver.* 19.) *Haſt thou killed and alſo taken poſſeſſion?* As if he had ſaid, Art thou indeed ſo hardned in ſin, that thou canſt goe downe and pleaſe thy ſelfe in the uſe and poſſeſſion of what thou haſt gotten ſinfully? how wicked art thou, who art ſo farre from having thy heart

heart to ſmite thee with ſorrow, for ſmiting a faithfull ſubject of thine to death by thy Authority, that now thou canſt delight thy ſelfe in eating up the vineyard of the dead man. Sometimes a godly man ſins by inordinate deſires after the creature, but 'tis very rare, that his ſtomacke doth not turne before he comes to eate his ſinne. *David* (2 Sam. 23. 15.) had a longing deſire to the waters of *Bethlem*, and upon the making knowne of his deſire, three mighty men broke through the hoaſt of the *Philiſtims*, and ſetched him the water; but (*ver.* 16.) when the water was brought him his ſtomacke turned, he would not drink becauſe it was gotten by the hazzard of three mens lives. For though *David* did not ſpeake thoſe words; *O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlem*, with an intent to put any of his Souldiers upon that dangerous enterpriſe in fetching it for him; yet that he might declare how far he was from indulging himſelfe in ſuch inordinate deſires, to engage any mans life for the pleaſing of his appetite, or ſatisfying of his preſent (though probably a very urgent) thirſt, therefore he would not drink it, but powrd it out unto the Lord; ſaying, *Farre be it from me O Lord, that I ſhould do this, is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?* Thus it is with tender conſciences, who though they ſometimes ſpeake and doe raſhly and ſinfully, yet before they come to eate their ſinne, that is, what they have ſinfully deſired or attained, they repent and cannot make either meate or drinke of it. Ungodly men can drinke blood, not onely that which (as in *David*s caſe) others have gotten for them with the danger of their lives, but even that which themſelves have gotten with the unjuſt ſpoyle, (ſometimes) of other mens lives, but often of their livelyhoods. *They violently take away flocks, and feede thereof.*

Againe, I ſhall touch a little upon the ſecond reading; *They violently take away flocks, and feed them*; that is, they doe not onely drive other mens flocks away, but keep them openly in their paſtures, and feede them; ſo Mr *Broughton*, *They rob away herds, and feed them.* The Originall word in the Hebrew, as alſo the Latine is ſeldome uſed to ſignifie mans feeding upon dead fleſh, but often to ſignifie mans feeding of living fleſh or cattell. A Shepheard is ſaid to feed his flocke. Thus firſt they play the theeves, violently taking away their neighbours flocks, next they turne Shepheards and Graſiers and feed them openly.

Vix vel ille bis ſaltum vel humum paſcere prohibet. Hinc deſere paſcua dicitur furari.

Sed haec pro furatis, poſtea in ſuis. Plaut.

This

This implyes three things concerning these oppressours, of whom *Job* speaks.

First, That they were great men, not petty robbers, who when they have got cattle away, hide them, or sell them off as soone as they can, they dare not put them in their own pastures, and usually they have none to put them in. But these *Nimrods*, these mighty Hunters take them violently, and then owne it broadly; they care not who sees what they have done. Thus the Prophet *Isaiah* reproves the Princes of *Israel* (*Chap.* 1. 23.) *Thy Princes are rebellious, and companions of theeves*; that is, they doe like theeves, they oppresse, and vex, and violently take away. They are so farre (which is the duty of Princes) from repressing theeves, that they encourage and countenance them, and not only so, but are actually theeves themselves. Theeves in Authority and power are the vilest theeves; who shall deliver from oppression, when Princes turne oppressors, and Great ones theeves?

Secondly, When it is said, that *they take away flocks, and fed them*, it shewes, that these robbers persisted in their sin, and were not ashamed of it. They could spoile their neighbours and never blush. They declared their sin as *Sodome*, they hid it not.

Thirdly, This imports that they had quiet possession of their ill gotten goods: What they got unjustly, they held securely and unmolested. Their stolne goods were neither recovered by law, nor forceably retaken from them; they fed them, and kept them as their owne; wickednesse prospered in their hand; no man saw the day of Gods reckoning with them. This their impunity, *Job* specially aymed at, when he said; *They violently take away flocks, and feed them, or feed upon them.*

Hence note.

That God leaves some wicked men in a long, and quiet possession, of what they have unjustly gotten.

To hold by injustice and oppression is the worst and most slippery title and tenure in the world yet as unjust gain makes some rich, as they improve and thrive, as they trade in, and encrease by wayes of unrighteousnesse, so they live prosperously, and hold strongly what they have unrighteously gained. They both feed upon & feed the flocks which they have taken away by violence. Though some oppressors are so suddainly attacked by pursuing vengeance,

vengeance, that they can neither feed nor feed upon their stolne flockes, but even before the meate is in their mouthes the wrath of God and justice of man falls upon them & will not suffer them to rost what they have got in this kinde of cruel hunting, yet others rost and eate to the full, though indeed, they doe but fat themselves against a day of slaughter which though it come slowly will surely come. *Job* still proceeds in describing their other acts of violence.

Vers. 3. *They drive away the Asse of the fatherless, they take the widdows Oxe for a pledge.*

There is somewhat considerable in these words, though they are but a continued description of the same thing under variety of instances.

They drive away the Asse of the fatherless.

Here is more violence still. Some conceive the singular is here put for the plurall; The *Asse* for the *Asses of the fatherlesse*; that is, all the Asses that he had, they left not one, but swept all away. But if we take the word strictly for one single Asse, then it aggravates the sin, *They drive away the Ass of the fatherless*: Though he hath but one, they drive that away. this hightens the oppression, as (2 *Sam.* 12. 3.) in the parable which *Nathan* put to *David* to convince him of his sinne; *He tells him of a rich man that had exceeding many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing save one little Ewe-Lamb, which he had bought, and nourished up, and it grew up together with him, and with his children, it did eate of his owne meat, and dranke of his owne cup, and lay in his bosome, and was unto him as a daughter: Now, when the traveller came to the rich man, he spared to take of his own flocke, and of his own herd to dresse for the way-fairing man, but tooke the poor mans lamb* &c. So here, *they drive away the Asse of the fatherlesse*; though he hath but one, they drive that away.

Abigeus is proprie dicitur qui pecora ex pascuis vel ex armentis subtrahit, & abigendi studium quasi artem exercet. Ulpian: *Insigne est apud Jurisconsultos Abigeatus crimen.*

Further, when he saith, *They drive away the Asse*, there are two things considerable in it. First, the Asse is a usefull and serviceable beast for the bearing of burthens. Secondly, the Asse is a meane creature, a beast of no great value, though of some use. They drive away the very Asse, and that *the Asse of the*

 Father-

Fatherlesse.

In the former verse, where it is said, *They violently take away flocks, and feed thereof*, there is no mention at all made, whose the flocks were, or from whom they took them. But here *Job* seems to lay the emphasis of their sinne, not so much upon what they drove away, as upon the person whose it was, which they drove away. They drive away not the great or the rich mans asse, but the asse of the *fatherlesse*. The word *fatherlesse* may be taken two waye; either strictly, for a child that is left without a father to take care of him & provide for him: or secondly, we may expound the word *fatherlesse* more largely for any that are poor, and in distresse; as was shewed (*Chap.* 22. 9.) How cruel are they, and how covetous are they, who will not spare the poor, no not poor Orphans! To take from the fatherlesse in either sence, aggravates the sin. Which aggravation of their sin is further prosecuted in the next instance of their oppression.

They take away the widdows Oxe for a pledge.

What a pledge is hath been opened at the 22. Chap. *ver.* 6. It is not sinfull to take a pledge; but there is a twofold sin implyed in this place, while they are charged with *taking the widdows oxe for a pledge*. First, in reference to the person of whom the pledge was taken, *the widdow*; Secondly, in reference to the thing which was taken for a pledge; it was the *widdows ox*. For the oxe being used for labour in tilling the ground (a most necessary use) should not be taken or at least not detained as a pledge; therefore we find that those things which were for necessary use and livelyhood, were forbidden to be taken for pledge *Exod.* 22. 26, 27.) or if they were taken they were presently to be restored before the Sun went down. But these cruel men took the widdows oxe for a pledge, and restored him not. We may also understand it (as some) that they tooke the oxe as if it were a pledge, doing it as of right, or under pretence and colour of Justice (as being her creditors) for a debt. And so the whole proceeding is expounded either of tyrants, that lay heavie taxes upon the poore people, and if they are not able to pay presently take all away by distreine: or of common extortioners, who lend money, or let leases, and upon every default of payment take the forfeiture, and carry all away as due to themselves.

Vi hac fit pactio, ut debitor ad certum tempus det creditori in pignus aliquid, quod sine quo commodè vivere non possit.

Nicet. Isaurus in illum locum fundatur per vim exigitur quod loco pignoris accipitur.

Quasi sub specie pignoris exigere.

Aquinas

Further,

Further, we may observe in Scripture, that as we have these two usually put together, *the fatherlesse, and the widdow*, so we have these two usually joyned together, *the asse, and the oxe*. Thus they are joyned twice in the ten Commandements, in the fourth and tenth, and often elsewhere. But some may question, Hath the poore widdow an oxe? The oxe seemes rather to belong to rich men, then to the poore widdow. To which we may answer, that the Hebrew word which we translate *oxe*, signifies as well the female, as the male, and so it is rendred by some here, *They take away the cow of the widdow*. The poor widdow lives upon the milk of her cow. Take that from her, and you take away all her living. But whether we understand it of the one or of the other, the difference is not materiall as to the scope and purpose of *Job*, who puts the widdows oxe or the widdows cow, either for the whole or chiefest part of her substance, *They take the widdows oxe for a pledge*.

You have it in the Hebrew, a female, and so it is rendred by some here. Bolt.

Herce note.

Some care not from whom or what they take, so they may have it.

They will take from the fatherles, they will take from the widdow. The Prophet *Amos* (Ch. 2. 7.) speaking of such oppressors, saith, *They pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poore, & turn aside the way of the needy*. The former part of those words, hath variety of reading & expositions, I will not stay upon them: but onely touch that which is most suitable to the point in hand, *They pant after the dust of the earth* that is, they exceedingly desire, and long for it. As *David* describes his holy desires (*Psal.* 42. 1.) *As the hart panteth after the water brookes, so panteth my soule after thee, O God*; that is, I extreamely desire the presence and communion with thee, even as the hart being hunted & heated desireth the waters. Thus they *panted after the dust of the earth*. That is, after those things which are but as the dust of the earth, or whose originall and matter is but the dust of the earth, *gold and silver*. These are but the refined dust of the earth; but whose dust did they pant after? *It was the dust on the head of the poor*; if they did but see a poor man to have gotten a little about him, though onely enough to keep life and soule together, to preserve himselfe and his family from starving or begging they presently panted after it; They were passionately desirous of it, they cast about how to get it. They who are enflamed with covetousnes,

are busie to find out, and having found out, are greedy to pursue all advantages and occasions to enrich themselves, though it be with the ruine of the poor. They are glad to get something even from them who (according to common speech) have nothing; they scrape from them, who have but scraps to live upon. Such was the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, *that* (as the Apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9) *though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poore, that we through his poverty might be rich.* And such is the covetousnes of some men, that though they are rich enough, yet they care not to make many, who are poor enough already, poorer, that they by making them poorer, might make themselves richer.

Secondly, Consider the matter, *they drive away the asse of the fatherlesse, and take the widdowes oxe* (or cow) *for a pledge.*

Hence note.

Some will sinne for a small matter, they will doe much evill, though they get but little *worldly good* by it, onely a silly asse, or a labouring oxe from the fatherlesse or the widdow. Who as they never have many of these, commonly, but one of each (for both words are of the singular number) so those that they have are usually none of the best, fattest, strongest, greatest, and so highest prized ones: As the fatherlesse, and the widdow, are poore, so their oxe and asse are but poor ones too; yet some will unjustly drive and take these poore things away; *They will play at small game* (as we say) *rather then sit out*; And act basely to get but an asse. The Prophet *Amos* (Chap. 2. 6.) represents the Lord protesting against such, thus, *For three transgressions of Israel, and for foure, I will not turne away the punishment thereof, because they sould the righteous for silver, and the poore for a paire of shoes*; that is, they sould the right of the poore, when they could get but a very small advantage by it, the worth of a paire of shoes. Some in sinning are like Eagles, they will not stoop at flyes, if they break the rules of righteousnesse and faithfulnesse, it shall be for a Crown or a Kingdom. They who sin for the greatest profit, make a loosing bargaine of it: What then do they who will sin for the lowest profit?

Thirdly, *They drive away the asse from the fatherlesse, and take the oxe of the widdow*; From the consideration of the persons wronged. Note,

It is sinfull to wrong any, but much more to wrong the poore, having met with this point from other passages in this booke, I onely name it, and adde, that there are two things which shew the sinfulnesse of taking from the poore. First, because they are weake and unable either to resist injuries, or to right themselves; They cannot help themselves, nor can they easily procure help from others. *The poor and him that hath no helper*, are put together (*Psal.* 72. 12.) and usually they are the same. *I returned* (saith *Solomon, Eccl.* 4. 1.) *and considered all the oppressions that are done under the Sun, and behold the teares of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter.* And they who have no comforter, surely have no helper. Now it is most sinfull to hurt them who are least able to help themselves, or find help from others. And who so helplesse, as the fatherlesse and the widdow? Secondly, it is therefore extreamely sinfull to wrong the poor, and especially these poore, because God hath commended them to the care, and tuition of the rich; they are his charge, God hath taken them into his protection, and hath trusted them over to men of power, that they should look to them. Magistrates should be as a wall of defence to the fatherlesse, and widdow, they should provide for them, and nourish them. Therefore to spoile, and rob them of all, how great a wickednesse is this? this is (as much as in them is) to make God a lyar, and unfaithfull to his word and promise. As then it should be a great encouragement to help the Godly poore, because in so doing we are a meanes to fulfill the promise of God to them. So we should therefore be afraid to wrong them, because in so doing we doe what we can to make the promise of God to them void. No marveile then, if the Apostle *James* placeth all religion, as to practise, in the *visitation of the widdow, & the fatherlesse in their affliction*, and if, in that sence, all religion be placed in it, what shall we judge of their religion, who afflict the widdow, and the fatherlesse? And if to visit them in trouble, be an act not onely of charity to them, but of honour and religion towards God, because God (who provides for all) hath taken upon him to provide for the fatherlesse, and the widdow, by name (So that we discharge Gods debt of promise to the fatherlesse, and widdow, when we do them good. If, I say, it be thus) then how grosse an act is it both of uncharita-

Sordidus lucri affectandi, ne vel occupandam pauperum [illegible] pro vectigali, ac extorquendum homini, sed ut ipsum [illegible] Theodoret.

charitablenesse to them, and irreligion towards God, to visit with trouble, to afflict & and vexe the fatherlesse and the widdow.

Fourthly, From the matter about which they sinned; *The asse of the fatherlesse, and the oxe, or cow of the widdow.*

Observe.

That the less any thing is for or about which we sin, the greater is that sin.

It shewes that we value God little, and that we set light by his commands, that we regard neither his favour nor his anger, when we can doe evill upon such poor accounts. That, by which many excuse their sinne, or creaseth it. They will say, 'twas a small matter, a little thing they stole, or tooke away, but to sin in a small matter may be found a great sin. What? will you break through the holy commands of God, and venture his displeasure for a trifle? though no man should encourage himself to sin, because he sinneth for a matter of importance, yet there is not only more folly, but more sinfulnesse in sinning for a little. Woe to those who sin for the greatest advantages, but more woe to those who value their souls, and the laws of God so little, as to disobey the one, and endanger the other, when scarce any thing which the world calls advantage is to be had. It hath been said of old; *If faith or an oath be to be broken, let it be broken for a Kingdome*; yet he will be found no gainer, who breakes his oath to get all the Kingdoms of the world: what shall we say then of those poore low spirited persons, who sin (as we say) for six pence, and break the laws of God, for so poor a profit, as will hardly give them a breake-fast. The sin of these oppressors is not yet full, see more and greater abominations then these.

Verf. 4. *They turne the needy out of the way, the poore of the earth hide themselves together.*

The word which we translate *needy* signifies to *desire*; they who have many wants have many desires, and the sense of our wants, is the spring of our desires; And though many who have no want in outward things are full of desires, yet the needy are properly the desirers; and whosoever desires much, either hath many wants, or is not satisfied with his fulnesse.

They

They turne the needy out of the way.

The Prophet (*Amos*, Chap. 2. 7.) reproving the Princes of *Israel*, saith, *they turne aside the way of the meek*, or (as others render) *of the poor and afflicted*. That speech of the Prophet seems to be of neer allyance if not altogether the same in sence with this of *Job*, *They turne the needy out of the way*.

What way this should be is expounded foure or five wayes.

First, Some take it metaphorically, for a morall way. And that, first, the way of righteousnesse and equity. And the wicked turne the needy out of that way, either, first, by their evill examples, or secondly, by their threatnings and persecutions. The sinfull practices of men in power, lead the needy, or the inferior sort into the practice of the same sins. And the oppressions of the mighty doe even compel the needy to turne aside from the right way of getting their livings, to stealing and living by spoile and rapine, as they themselves doe. When rich men oppresse the poore, they turne the poore either to begging, or theeving. When men are vexed and molested in honest wayes, they lie under a great temptation to turne and betake themselves to those ways which are dishonest. *Paul* saith of himself being a persecutor, that he compelled the professors of the Gospel to *blaspheme*, (*Acts* 26. 11.) and this he effected in one or both the wayes above specified, either first, by his example, he being a blasphemer (as he confessed, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13.) they imitated him in blaspheming or speaking evil of the wayes of God, and of his people: or, secondly, he did it by his cruelty, vexing them so in the profession of Christ, that some who were unsetled fell away, and blasphemed the name of Christ which they had professed. But though this be a truth, yet I shall not give it as the intent of this place. Therefore

Secondly, *They turne the needy out of the way*; that is, out of the way of that justice or right which is due to them. And so it suites well with what he said before; *they drive away the asse of the fatherless*, &c. and *they turne the needy out of the way*: that is, from what is his right, or from all means of recovering his right.

Thirdly, *They turne the needy out of the way*: that is, out of the way of their lively-hood; we commonly enquire, how doth such

such a man live? and 'tis answered, he lives in a very good way, he hath such a way of living, such a trade, calling, or profession; that's his way. Thus, to *turne the needy out of the way*, is to put them besides the way of getting their bread, & maintaining their families with necessaryes for this life. In a figurative sence, every mans profession and calling is his way, and he that molests him in it, turnes him out of his way. As suppose a man live in the Country, where he keepes a farme, if his cattle be taken away, he is turned out of his way, he can live no longer in that way. He that takes away what is instrumentall to a man in his calling, puts him out of his way: And he that disturbs a man in the worke of his calling, turns him out of his way. Our ordinary work is our way, (*Psal.* 1. 1.) *Blessed is the man that hath not stood in the way of sinners*, that is, who hath not taken the course which (as such) sinners take. Now as a Godly man turnes out of, or will not stand in the way of sinners; so oppressing sinners turne many that are needy and Godly out of the way of their lawfull callings, and will not suffer them to stand or abide in them.

Vis proferum ad facinus filii necessaria parentis. Aquin. Vi amisere eam libertatem, cum illi derisit fiscus, nobis ars cui nascimur pauper, ac cerita paupt.

Secondly, We may understand this way properly for the way or roade wherein men walke or travaile upon their occasions; and then these words; *They turne the needy out of the way*, may be expounded, as an argument of the extreame pride of these *Nimrods*, or *sonnes of violence*. They caused the needy to turne aside out of the way to give them place, or they made the poor to keep out of their sight for feare of them, lest as they had already spoiled them of their estates, so they should also abuse their persons, and make them slaves. Thus they turned the poor out of the way; that is, they durst not come in sight for feare; this suites well with the last clause of the verse.

Hic grassandi bonis nullis ne tenuis quidem coercitis, vicatim bis tuta eis vias adeo undique lege ra ista publica et lacebras quaerere passim cogantur. Bez.

The poor of the earth hide themselves together.

The word *needy*, in the former part of the verse (as was touch before) signifies one full of desires; here the word which we render *poore*, notes one that is *humble, meek, lowly*, not onely one low in estate, but lowly in minde, not onely him that is poore in purse, but poor in spirit; so 'tis translated, (*Zeph.* 2. 3.) *Seeke ye the Lord, ye meeke of the earth*, even these *poore of the earth hide themselves together*; wicked proud men make the poor seek corners; the poor have often had experience of their cruelty, and rough

Invisi fit ser cerunt. Au

rough dealing, and therefore run together into holes and corners to hide themselves, as desiring rather the society of wild beasts, then of such beastly men. Further, the word which we render *together*, may be translated *alike*; *They hide themselves alike*; that is, one poor godly man as well as another, they all fare alike, they deal no better with one then with another, none have hope to escape the hands of these unmercifull tyrants. Thus it was in the time of that great oppression which the *Israelites* were under by the *Philistims*: *The Israelites hid themselves*: When *Jonathan* and his Armour-bearer got up, and discovered themselves to the Garrison of the *Philistims*, the *Philistims* said, *Behold the Hebrewes come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves*, (1 *Sam.* 14. 11.) The Author to the *Hebrews* gives us a description of the poor Saints thus hiding themselves together, (*Heb.* 11. 37.) *They wandred about in sheepe-skins, and goate-skins, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented, they wandred in deserts, and mountains, in dens, and caves of the earth. The poor and meek of the earth hid themselves together.*

Thus we have had a large enumeration of those violences which *Job* had observed among men, and men prospering in them. First, violence upon lands; 2ly, upon cattle; 3ly, upon persons, the needy, and the poor are forced to run together into corners; *While the fire of some encreaseth, the affliction of others must needs encrease.*

Hence note.

Sinners know no bounds.

They who at first wrong men in their lands, will not scruple to wrong them in their cattle, and within a while, they will throw bones to fall upon their persons.

Secondly, Note.

That evills which are done to men immediately in their persons, are more sinfull then those that are done to them in their Goods, or Cattle, or Estate.

Job [illegible] of their doings last. 'Tis bad enough to touch the goods of a poore man, but to trouble his person, or cause [illegible] is farre worse.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Note.

That the promotion, and exaltation of wicked men, is the oppression, and vexation of poore men, especially of all of poore godly men.

It is a sad time with poor men, most of all with poor godly men, when the wicked are exalted. *Solomon* gives us this note in expresse terms, (*Pro.* 28 28.) *When the wicked rise* (that is, *when they rise in power and authority*) *men hide themselves*, that is, good men hide themselves: poore men hide themselves when the wicked rise, but most of all such poor men as are godly. *The reigne of wicked men is the ruine of the godly.* Which is more plaine by the opposition made in the last clause of the verse; *When the wicked rise, men hide themselves, but when they perish the righte us increase.* In which Proverb, *rising* is opposed to *perishing*, but *men* and *righteous* are the same. When the wicked perish, those righteous men, who before hid themselves, appeare, and shew themselves againe. Some poore men are turbulent, proud, untractable, seditious, men of unquiet spirits, if such be dealt with by justice, and made to hide themselves, they have their desert. But the poor who are also humble, meek, and of a quiet spirit, (as the word here imports) are the aime of the wicked. Such *David* found in his low estate, and against them he prayed (*Psal.* 35. 19, 20) *Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoyce over me: neither let them wink with the eye* (that is, let them not have occasion to contemne and despise me, of which, winking with the eye was a token) *that hate me without a cause. For they speak not peace, but they devise deceitfull matters against them that are quiet in the land.*

Lastly Note.

The poore goe by the worst, and the weakest to the wall, the needy are turned out of the way, and the poor hide themselves.

And therefore saith God (*Psal.* 12. 5) *For the oppression of the poore, and for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise and set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.* Oppression may quickly empoverish the rich, but usually the poor fall under oppression, they that are full sigh, when they are made needy and empty, when all is taken from them, but usually the needy and empty

ty are made to sigh; *for the oppression of the poor, will I arise saith the Lord.* Rich and great men can defend themselves from oppression, but the poor have no shelter; rich men will purchase their right, but the poor who hath nothing to give, seldome finds a friend to deliver him, and get him his right. The storme falls upon the poor, and most upon Gods poor, they are most subject, or lie most open to the evills of this world, of whom this present evill world is not worthy, and for whom the good of the next world is prepared. And therefore they should fly to shelter, while they are here, get under covert, run into the name of God for safety and protection; they who are most subject to oppression, need most protection. Some are so poore that they have nothing to loose, and so needy, that they need not feare oppression. They have neither bread to eate, nor cloathes to put on. These are no baite for covetousnesse; But, they also are to be reckoned among the poore, who have no more then will save them from poverty; and they are among the needy, who have only so much as serves to supply their own needs. These poore and needy ones are game for the oppressors, these the Wolves and Lyons of the earth make their prey. The oppression and wickednesse of these hath ascended three steps, in the context now opened. They are first *Land-invaders*; secondly, *Cattel-takers*; thirdly, *men-troublers*. *Job* carrieth on the description of their wickednesse yet further, in the following parts of this Chapter.

JOB, CHAP. 24. Vers. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Behold as wilde asses in the desert, goe they forth to their worke, rising betimes for a prey: the wildernes yeildeth food for them and for their Children.
They reap every one his Corne in the field: and they gather the vintage of the wicked.
They cause the naked to lodge without Cloathing: that they have no Covering in the Cold.
They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a shelter.

JOB proceeds to enumerate the wickednesses of those men whom yet God spared, and bare with; he had set downe many of their sinfull wayes before; they *removed the land-marks*, they *violently tooke away flocks*, they spared not *the asse of the fatherles, nor the widdows oxe*; They *turned the needy out of the way*, so that *the poore of the earth were forced to hide themselves together*. See now the further progresse of their wickednes, even to admiration, for so much the word, *Behold*, with which *Job* leads on his discovery of their vexatious practices, doth import.

Vers. 5. *Behold as wilde asses in the desert, they go forth to their worke.*

There is a difference in opinion among Interpreters about the subject of this verse, whom we are to understand under this description, *As wilde asses in the desert, going forth to their worke.* Some of Note conceive that *the poore* are the subject of these words, or the persons here intended. And then they hold forth the hardship and misery to which they were reduced by those merciless tyrants; *Behold as wilde asses in the desert, they goe forth to their worke.* Oppressors did so vex them and strip them out of all, that they who heretofore had enough to live upon, were constrained to goe forth to day-labour and worke for their living, at the command, or under the cruel bondage of those inhumane Task-Masters.

Exegesis præsidentis illi, de intolerandis improborum fœvitiis in pauperes, quorum opera contra legem exigunter. Jun:

Yet

Yet I conceive that we may more clearly expound these words as carrying a continued series of the practices of wicked men, who are here compared to wilde asses; and there is a word in the 5th verse which gives a speciall reason why this should not be understood of the poore or oppressed, but of the oppressor, where it is said, *they rise betimes for a prey*; now that word which we render *a prey*, cometh from a root which signifies *to tear*; to rend, to pull asunder after the manner of wilde beasts; and is of the same sound as well as signification with our English word, *teare*, therefore it should rather be understood of opressors, then of the oppressed; for a man that goes forth to labour, and work for his living, cannot properly be said to *rise betimes for a prey*, for he goes forth to get his bread honestly; now a prey is that which is got by violence; and the word is never applyed to men, but in allusion to ravenous and devouring beasts. *Jacob* comparing his son *Juaah* to a Lyons whelpe (*Gen.* 49. 9.) saith, *From the prey, my Son, thou art gone up.* So *Moses* (Deut. 33. 20.) *And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad; he dwelleth as a Lyon and teareth the Arme with the Crown of the head.* And *David* praying to be delivered out of the hand of his enemy, gives this reason (*Psalm.* 7. 2.) *Lest he tear my soul like a Lyon, while there is none to deliver.* So that the word noting properly the act of a ravenous beast who lives upon spoyle and prey; It is very improper to apply it to the work of a labouring man, who lives and earnes his bread with the sweat of his brows. Yet I find that word signifying *food* in generall (*Mal.* 3. 10.) *Bring ye all the tythes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house.* Which the interlineal renders, *that there may be a prey in mine house*; and another thus, *that there may be that, which ye snatch, in mine house.* Surely the Lord strikes at some misdemeanor while he expresseth the food of the Priests & Levits, by a word signifying that which is torn away by violence. And (I conceive) it may either reflect upon the people who parted so hardly with the tythes which did belong to the Temple at that time, that they were rather torne or pulled from them by a kinde of violence, then freely paid or brought in according to the law of God: or it might reflect upon the extreme greedines of the Priests that did administer in the tẽple, as if they did look upon the tythes & their portiõ in thẽ, with as earnest desire as wild beasts hang over & wait for a prey. So that where

Rapere est proprie trahere, deripere, diripere, auferre, abstrahere, proprium ferarum est.

Ut sit præda in domo mea. Mont.

Ut sit quod rapiat. &c. Pagn.

where this word is used to signifie food, there is somewhat in the circumstance of the Text, which leaves a touch of rapine and violence upon it. And therefore it is not applicable to the earnings of honest labourers, but to the cruell gettings of theeves and oppressors. *The mountaines of prey*, spoken of (*Psal.* 76. 4.) were eyther those places where conquering Armyes devided the spoyle after a victory obtained; or where robbers preyed upon passengers. And therefore I shall take the subject of this verse to be the oppressors of the poor, not the poor oppressed.

Behold, as wilde asses in the desert they goe forth.

הִנֵּה פְרָאִים — The particle of likenesse *as*, is not in the Hebrew, nor yet the word *Asses*, expressely. And therefore Mr *Broughton* reads strictly to the Original, *Behold the wilde in the wildernesse goe forth to their worke*. The word signifies *wilde* at large; but because *wilde asses* are extreamly wilde, therefore the word is specially applyed to them. Thus the Angel said of *Ishmael* (Gen. 16. 12) *And he will be a wilde man.*

פֶּרֶא אָדָם
Ferus homo

Behold as wilde asses in the desert.

The desert is the dwelling place of wilde asses: Tame asses or asses brought to hand, are about the house, or in the enclosed pastures, but wilde asses inhabit the desert. The word that we render *desert*, comes from a roote that signifies *to speak*; and the desert is so called by the figure of *Contrary speaking*, because there is little or no speaking in deserts; many words are heard onely in Cities or places where many people frequent. It signifies also to lay waste, because deserts are waste and barren places, in comparison of dreste and Enclosed grounds; such is the place whether these spoylers goe forth *as wilde asses*

עֲרָבָה מִדְבָּר
Locatus ad serendi, hra'm jacesi locus a fertilitate remotus.

To their worke.

But wild asses worke not, onely tame asses are labouring asses; So that the similitude runs not upon that point; yet we may say, wilde asses have a worke, and 'tis much like that which wicked men doe in the deserts; they worke there, but 'tis wilde worke, such as wild asses are busied about, the getting of prey. *They goe forth to their worke*; and that word signifies not onely a worke, but an *art*, or a *Craft*. These spoylers were their *Crafts-masters*, and

כְּפָעֳלָם
i. e. Opere vel artificium suum vel artem unde victum quærunt. Merc.

and could doe mischiefe cunningly, as having been brought up as apprentices to it, or studied it like Schollers, they had well learned and were verst in their worke, and what their work was we may learne in the next words.

Rising betimes for a prey.

Like worke-men, like worke. To take a purse, or spoyle passengers, that's their worke; And they get up and are out betimes about this worke; *For a prey, they rise betimes.* The Hebrew is, *They morning it*; that is, they rise early in the morning; to doe a thing in the morning, is in Scripture language to doe a thing diligently and with greatest Intention of spirit, because diligent active men are up early; so that to rise in the morning is not onely an Expression of the time of their rising, but of their spirit and diligence at their worke when they were risen, whensoever they rose. The whorish woman saith to the young man, (*Pro.* 7. 15.) *Therefore came I forth to meete thee diligently, to seeke thy face.* The Hebrew is, *To seeke thee in the morning*, or, *to morning thee*, and yet it was *in the twilight* in the evening, when she came out to meete him, as is expressed at the 9. verse of the same Chapter. Here indeed in the text, *To morning it*, notes that they tooke the first of the morning for their worke; *rising betimes for a prey.* And that not without successe, as the last clause of the verse sheweth.

שָׁחַר מְשַׁחֲרֵנִי
Mire phrasing quæsitum vel summo studio. Drus.

Verbum hebraicum delirat difficultate unde significat præcipuo studio vel cura aliquid agere.

The wildernesse yieldeth food for them and for their Children.

Where have they their prey? The text answers, *they have it in the wildernesse.* In the former part of the verse he spake of the *desert*, and in this latter of the *wildernes*, in both he means the same place, both import barrennes, wildnes and wastnes, Mr *Broughton* translates; *The vast Ground giveth him bread for his young.* We say, *the wildernesse yeldeth food for them.* &c. It may seem strange that a wild wilderneſse, a wilderneſse untilled, unplanted, uninhabited, should yeeld them food.

עֲרָבָה
solitudo ita quod מִדְבָּר desertum hinc Arabia deserta.

I answer; Firſt, The Scripture speaks of many wilderneſſes that were planted & inhabited. *John* the Baptiſt preached in the wildernes of *Judea* (*Mat.* 3. 1.) & the wilderneſſe had many houſes if not towns in it, ſuch wilderneſſes yeeld food in plenty. Secondly, the wildernes may be ſaid to yeeld the food, not becauſe they did

live

live upon that which grew in the wilderness, or in these wast places, but because in the wilderness they took occasion to spoyle and rob those that thorough it travailed to other places. Many get their livings there, where none live, and where nothing is to be had of the growth of the place to live upon. Outrages and robberyes are usually committed in such places. And therefore in the Prophesie of that great Peace which Christ should give to his Church (*Psal.* 72. 3.) It is said, *The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousnesse*; He names the mountains and the hills above other places, because in or upon them violence is often exercised; and to say, *the mountains shall bring peace*, is much more then to say the valleys and the Cityes shall bring peace: when there is peace and safety upon hills and mountains, we may presume that there is peace every where. Therefore as when God promiseth (*Isa.* 60. 17.) that in the latter dayes he will make the *officers among his people peace, and their exacters righteousnesse*, he means that he will make all sorts of men peacefull and righteous, because he will make them such who are usually most troublesome and unrighteous *officers & exactors:* so when he saith *the mountains shall bring peace*, the meaning is, every place shall, or that the peace shall be universal in all places, because mountains and wildernesses are the places where robbers and poylers take their prey, and get their subsistence. And hence it may well be answered, why *Job* saith, that *the wildernes yeelded them food*, even because that place was fittest for them to rob and spoyle in, who made the spoyle of others their daily food. Thus *the wilderness yeelds food for them*

And for their Children.

The word signifies any that are young, and is taken as well for *servants* as *for Children* (1 Sam. 21. 5.) *The vessels of the young men are holy*, said *David* to the Priest concerning his followers. So (1 *Sam.* 25. 9.) Thus here it comprehends all that are about them, even all their family and retinue. They and all theirs, all that belong to them have their food in the wilderness, that is, there they take opportunity by violence and oppression to maintaine themselves and theirs.

Here we may consider, first, that *Job* calls these spoylers *wilde asses*, nor doth the Scripture speake this in vaine.

Hence

Hence note.

Wicked men are like Beasts or beestiall in their dispositions and actions.

David compares the best of that sort, *men in honour*, to beasts (*Psalm.* 49. 20.) *Man* (saith he) *that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish. Davids* man that *understandeth not*, is not a man without natural, but a man without true spiritual capacity and understanding, A man who fears not God, (for *to feare God that is wisdome*) and who departs not from evil, for *to depart from evill that is understanding* (*Job* 28. 28.) Now how great and large an understanding so ever any great and honourable man hath, yet if he hath not an understanding in these things, *he is like the beasts that perish.* It is not said he is like this or that beast, but he is like *the beasts that perish.* Take any beast, or all beasts, the worst of beasts, he is the picture of them all, and he daily exemplifies the vilest of their qualities in his own. The Prophet *Micah* (Chap. 3. 1, 2, 3.) saith that of them, which speaks them rather beasts indeed then like beasts, *Heare I pray you, O heads of Jacob and ye Princes of the house of Israel, is it not for you to know Judgement?* (as if he had said, who should if not you) *who hate the good, and love the evill, who pluck off their skin from off them, & their flesh from off their bones, who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay off their skin, and break their bones*, &c. How could the beast be more lively acted then by these men? *Paul* fought with beasts at *Ephesus* (1 Cor. 15. 32.) which, I grant, may be expounded properly & possibly best so. It being usual in those times of persecution under Heathenish power, to cast the Christians to the wild beasts, and for the common sort to cry out, *Away with the Christians to the Lyons*; yet it is as true that *Paul* did fight or contend with beasts in the shape of men. And he speaks particularly concerning blood-*Nero*, a man in the highest honor of that age. (2 *Tim.* 4. 17.) *I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lyon.* The Baptist called the Pharisees *a generation of vipers*, (*Matth.* 3. 7.) And *Herod* is called by Christ, *that Fox*, (Luke 13. 32.) And 'tis said of all ungodly men at once (*Rev.* 22. 15.) *Without are doggs.* Wolves, Lyons, Foxes, Vipers, Serpents; Doggs, the worst of Creatures for rapine and spoyle, do but expresse the inhumanity and cruelty of wicked men. And because they

they are compared to wild Asses in the Text, I will give you some paralels between them and the wilde Asse.

Libertatis symbolum est Onager.

First, In their lawlesness and unsubjection to command: carnal men are lawlesse. The Apostle calls them so (1 *Tim.* 1. 9.) *Knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient*; not that they have no law, but they live as if they had none, they who love to disobey the law are lawlesse; and embrace libertinisme in stead of liberty. Thus the wicked man is as the *wild asse*, for his licentiousness and lawlesness; for so the wild asse is described in the 39th Chapter of this book, verse the 5th; *Who hath sent out the wild asse free? or loosed the bands of the wild asse?* what's the freedome of the wild asse? not like that of men who have the priviledge of freedom in an order, but to be free without order. The wicked would be where they will, and doe what they list, this is the freedome of the wild asse. Now as God himselfe there puts the Question, *Who hath sent out the wild asse free?* who hath manu-mitted him? Surely no man hath done it but God hath planted it in the nature of the wild asse to be free, and to live without bands or bounds. And if we should ask the Question *Who hath sent out wicked men free? and who hath loosed the bands of the wicked?* The answer must be, Satan hath done it, and their own evill hearts have done it: they have broke the bands, and cast away all cords from them, they have set themselves free, in such a freedome as it is, which is indeed perfect thraldome to their own lusts, and the laws of the Prince of darknesse; they are not free by being delivered from the bondage and condemnation of the law, but by casting off all obedience and submission to it.

Secondly, Wild asses are extreamely violent and Impetuous in their desires or lusts. *Jeremy* expostulating with the *Jewes* about their revolting from, and rebellion against God, compares them (*Chap.* 2. 24.) to *A wild asse used to the wildernes, that snuffeth up the winde at her pleasure, in her occasion who can turn her away? all they that seeke her, will not weary themselves, in her moneth they shall finde her*; there's no medling, no dealing with the wild asse while lust is upon her, she will have the desire of her heart if she can. Thus wicked men are given up to and transported with their pleasures and inordinate affections, in their *occasion*, that is, when the heate of their intemperate desires or lusts, of any kind, are upon them, there is no turning of them; onely, *in their moneth*, when sorrowes and pains are upon them, they may be spoken with. We may also read both this sin and the reproofe of that people in a like alusion (*Hos.* 8. 9.)

Thirdly, The wild asse is an Emblem of the wicked man, especially as he is an oppressor or tyrant in his unsociableness, for as the asse refuseth society, so these are unfit for society, and are indeed enemies of mankinde; They are unfit not only for spirituall, but also for Politicall, or Civill Society. God speaking of the wild asse (in the 39. Chapter of this booke, *v.* 6, 7.) saith, *Whose house I have made the wildernesse, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver; the range of the mountaines is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.* Though the oppressor live in the City, yet he is like the wild asse in this, he cares not to maintain society as he ought; he cares for the society of others onely for himselfe, *he scorneth the multitude of the City*, he is for the range of the mountains, where he may take all he can get, *he searcheth after every green thing*, whatsoever hath pleasure or profit in it, he pursues it for himselfe.

Belocitas timiditatis subsidium.

Timida est omnis Nequitia.

This paralel might be drawn out further; wild asses (as Naturalists have observed) are feareful. Those Creatures that are most swift, are naturally most fearefull; and their swiftnes is a releef to their fearfulnesse. Thus, wicked men are fearfull. They only have true Courage who feare God, and where the feare of God is not, every other feare is, or every other thing is feared. They who find not a friend in their own consciences, are ready to suspect every one for an enemy. So that though every wicked man would have all that he can get to himselfe alone, yet he dares not be alone in getting it. And upon those termes onely he is willing that others should joyne with him in the profit, because he would have them joyne with him in the sin. (*Pro.* 1. 11. 14.) *Come with us, let us lay wait for blood*, &c. *Cast in thy lot with us, we will all have one purse.* Wicked men are not for society, unlesse it be in wickednes, and yet theirs is not so much a society as a conspiracy. A wicked man, let his sin be what it will, is glad when he hath partners in doing it, or that others do the same with him, not only because he hath a suscipicion of the lawfulnesse of what he doth, but also because he suspects some suddaine danger in doing it. And hence some

ſome have noted that the woman, who committed the firſt ſin, did not like to be alone in it, and therefore having eaten her ſelf ſhe gave the fruit of the tree to her husband to eate alſo ſhe deſired an aſſociate both to countenance her in the act, and to help beare her out in the conſequents of it. And when they had both ſinned, they ſhewed themſelves like wild Aſſes indeed, running into the thickets at the approach of God, there to hide themſelves both for ſhame and feare. *Behold as wild aſſes*

They go forth to their work.

Hence note.

To wrong men, to ſin againſt God, is the worke of wicked men.

That's their buſineſs. Therefore in Scripture they are often called *workers of Iniquity*; Implying that to doe iniquity is their trade of life, or that which they live by and daily ſet themſelves about. The worke of God is none of their worke, nor doe they count it ſo, *being* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Tit.* 1.16) *abominable, diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* Good work is put into the hand of man by the hand of God, but they have their work from another hand, *the luſts of your father ye will do* (ſaith Chriſt to the Phariſees, *John* 8. 44.) that is, ye will do the devils work; That's their work, and they goe forth to it as the honeſt labouring man *goeth forth unto his work and to his labour untill the Evening*, (*Pſal.* 104. 23.) ſo the wicked man goeth forth to ſin as to his worke; And that he doth ſo is evident upon a four-fold account.

Firſt, Becauſe he doth not ſtumble upon it, but intends it; a godly man falls into ſin, but to ſin is not his intendment, a godly man may ſin when he goeth forth, but he doth not goe forth to ſin, he doth not make it his buſineſſe. That is properly a mans work, which he propoſeth to himſelf to do, and purpoſeth to do.

Secondly, He goeth forth to it as to his work, for he delights in it, he is pleaſed with it. It is his meate and drink, yea his mirth and muſicke to doe evill. That is properly a mans worke, which though it be painfull to him to doe it, yet he is pleaſed in doing it.

Thirdly, He goes forth to it as to his worke, for he ſpends his

his ſpirits, his ſtrength and time in it; we do many things which are not our worke, they are but by-works, or beſide our worke, we beſtow little of our time and ſtrength in ſuch things: that which a man beſtows his time and ſtrength upon, that whereat he labours to ſweat and wearineſſe of body, that's his worke; now the time of wicked men runs out, and their ſtrength is conſumed in ſinning, and though they are not weary of committing iniquity, yet they weary themſelves (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Jer.* 9. 5.) to commit iniquity, therefore that's their worke.

Fourthly, Wicked men are skilfull to ſin, they ſin with a kind of art, therefore that's their worke; that which is a mans proper worke, he hath knowledge about it, and is dextrous at; He doth not bungle, but makes cleare worke (as we ſay) of that which is *his worke.* A Miniſter ſhould preach the Goſpel like a workman that *needs not be aſhamed* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks.) The wicked ſin like workmen, though the more they do ſo, the more cauſe they have to be aſhamed. The Prophet (*Jer.* 9. 5.) bewayling the extreame ſinfulneſſe of thoſe times, ſaith, *They have taught their tongues to ſpeak lyes.* As if they had ſtudied the art and language of lying, while they told or made groſs lyes, they would not make them groſſely, but with a kind of fineneſs and neatneſs. As though what Godly man doth according to the mind of God, he doth by grace, yet he uſeth a kind of artificialneſs in doing it; and is therefore exhorted to walke circumſpectly or accurately; that is, to act all his duties with exactneſſe; ſo, though what an ungodly man doth againſt the minde of God, he doth it by nature, or very naturally, yet he uſeth a kind of artificialneſſe in doing it, and therefore he is ſaid (*Pſal.* 50. 19, 20.) *To give his mouth to evill, and to frame deceit with his tongue, to ſit* (as an artiſt at his work) *and ſpeake againſt his brother, and ſlander his own mothers ſonne.* Thus, *they goe forth to their worke,*

Riſing betimes for a prey.

Whence obſerve.

A wicked man is very induſtrious and diligent in doing his work.

To riſe betimes, and to doe a thing diligently, are the ſame in Scripture; to riſe betimes is to riſe ſomewhat before the ordinary time of riſing; Now, when a man breaks his ſleepe to go about his

his worke, this shews **that he** is industrious at it. As some **wicked** men quickly throw off **their** sleepe, that they may doe mischiefe: So (which argues the same principle and spirit) *Others sleep not unlesse they have done mischiefe, and their sleep is taken away, unlesse they cause some to fall.* (Prov. 4. 16.) Their owne sleepe is taken **away**, unlesse they take away somewhat which is not their **owne.** They will defraud themselves of rest, rather then not defraud others of their right. They go not more unwillingly to prison after they have done evill, then they go to bed before they have done it. O how are they set upon mischiefe, whose sleepe departs from them unlesse they do it, and who cannot rest unlesse they trouble others. The servants of God, when they are up in zeale cannot sleepe unlesse they doe good; as *David* speakes (*Psal.* 132. 4, 5, 6.) *Surely I will not come into the Tabernacle of my house, nor clime up to my bed; I will give no sleepe to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eye-lids, till I have found a place for God*, &c. he was so zealous for God that if he could he would not sleepe, he would forbid his own rest, though he had never so much mind to it, till he had finisht that worke for God. So saith the wicked man, I will give mine eyes no sleep nor slumber to mine eye-lids till I have done this or that mischief, and brought my device to passe. When the wicked lye waking on their beds, what are they about then? their waking thoughts in the night are to doe mischiefe in the morning. (*Micah* 2. 1, 2.) *Woe to them that devise Iniquity, and worke evill upon their beds.* How doe they worke it upon their beds? they worke it in their thoughts, in their inward shop, there they fashion it, and *when the morning is light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand*; they hinder themselves from sleepe, that they may forward themselves in sin; The night is spent in Imagining, and plotting, and the day in accomplishing what they have imagined & plotted. Their morning light is spent in the workes of darknesse, and the text saith, *They practice it, because it is in the power of their hand.* They never consider what is Just for them to doe, but what they have power to doe, if they have ability they want no will for the vilest practices.

Againe, as they cannot sleep sometimes for devising evill, so when they have slept, their first waking thoughts are about evil; and this also is a further proof of their extreame industriousnes in doing

doing evill. For as it is with a zealous Godly man, his first waking thoughts are with God and Christ, or about his own soule, how God may be honoured, & how his soule may be saved. (*Ps.* 139 18.) *O how precious are thy thoughts* (that is, thoughts of thee) *to me O God, how great is the summe of them! when I awake I am still with thee*: that is, *my thoughts and meditations are with thee as soon as ever I awake*; here's the diligence of the soule after God: so the wicked man when he awakes he is still with sin; And if he cannot awake naturally soone enough to sin, he will force himselfe to awake: And so he may be said to awake to sin, before he is awake; for as some nurse up and feed their sleepe when they are a little awakned like the sluggard, *yet a little slumber, yet a little sleep*; so others offers violence to, or break their sleepe, that is, as the text saith, *they rise betimes*, even before the usuall time of rising, that they may get a prey. It is no wonder, if they who sticke not at breaking the laws of God, break also the lawes of their own rest.

Diligence is good about that which is good; it is good to be zealously affected alwayes in a good matter, but zeal and diligence misplaced, how evill are they! it is better to creep in a good way, then to run in a wrong way Even idlenes is better then such diligence; yet they who misplace their zeale and diligence, are commonly more in both then they who place them right; and they who are in a false way, make more hast then they who are in a true. The Scripture notes the extream Intensences of the builders of *Babel* upon their worke. And that's the straine of most men in such work as theirs was, the building of a *Babel*, or in doing that, which will be but a monument of their own pride and folly, or of their rebellion against and contempt of God. (*Gen* 11. 6.) *This they begin to doe, and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to doe*; if they have but a mind to it they will doe it, let it cost what it will, neither difficulty nor danger shall restraine them See also how Industrious the ten Tribes were in their Idolatrous worship which *Jeroboam* had set up, (1 *Kings* 12. 30.) *And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one even unto Dan*; that is, they went a great way to worship; for howsoever *Jeroboam* pretended the ease and accommodation of the people in setting up those Calves (*ver.* 28.) *It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; Behold thy*

Gods

Gods O Israel, which brought thee upout of the Land of Egypt (as if he had said, thy Gods are at hand, or in thine eye, thou needest not toyle thy selfe in going so farre to serve them) yet *Jerusalem* was neerer unto most of the *Israelites*, then either *Dan* or *Bethel* were. For *Bethel* one of those places of worship was in the utmost bounds of the South (*Josh.* 18. 22.) & *Dan* the other place of worship was in the utmost bounds of the North, (*Josh.* 19. 47.) so that they were willing to take more paines to follow the Idolatrous inventions of man, then to keep to the Institutions of God. *Jerusalem* was neerer to most of the ten Tribes then either *Dan* or *Bethel*; and yet thither they would goe. All the way to sin, whether in ordinary practice or worship is down hill to nature, we have both the wind & tide of the world with us, will we set our faces hel-ward; and to be sure, Satan will never check their diligence who are doing his worke, nor take them off from their pace, who are going or Galloping his way. We have a cleare evidence of this in the case of the worshippers of those two Calves in *Dan* & *Bethel*; and it is further observed by some, that the *Israelites* grew so zealous in a short time in that abomination, that they who dwelt neer *Bethel* did even disdain to worship at *Bethel*, they disdained to serve their God at their own doors, and therefore they that dwelt at or neer *Bethel* would go to *Dan* and worship; and they that dwelt at or neer *Dan* would go to *Bethel* to worship. The heart of man is so mad upon Idolatry, that he is willing to be at any cost or paines for it; He scornes to serve a false God at an easie rate, nor is he pleased (which is the onely thing which pleaseth some who pretend to the true religion) with a cheap religion. You may lay what tax you will upon him either of pains or purse, and he is willing, yea even ambitious to pay or perform it. Thus the blinde votaryes among the Papists at this day will needs goe a Pilgrimage to remoteth places, they will travaile to *Jerusalem* and visit the Sepulchre &c. these long Journeyes they glory in. it is but a step to them hard penances, not only fastings but whippings they glory in. The nature of man will carry him two miles at his own bidding, rather then one at Gods How may it shame Godly men for their sloath in doing the will of God, when they heare how industrious evill men are in doing their owne? how may it shame them, that they should take lesse pains to keep a righteous law, then many doe to satisfie a filthy lust?

Who

Who *like wild Asses goe forth to their worke, rising betimes for a prey.* And whereas it followes.

The wildernesse yeeldeth food for them and for their Children.

Note.

Wicked men will have it, if it be to be had above ground.

They that live by rapine, will live any where; every mans estate is theirs, if they can but get it. They finde a harvest in the wilderneſſe, and riches in the desert.

Againe, Note.

Wicked men lay up for theirs, as well as for themselves by the spoyle of others.

The light of nature teacheth parents to lay up for their children, and they who get an estate by wronging others, yet thinke they are bound to provide for more then themselves (*Nahum* 11. 12.) *Where is the dwelling of the Lyons, and the feeding place of the young Lyons? where the Lyon even the old Lyon walked, and the Lyons whelpe, and none made him afraid. The Lyon did teare in peices enough for his whelps, and strugled for his Lyonnesses.* What did the Lyon? the Lyon did teare in peices! and how much did he teare in peices? not onely enough to fill his own belly, but to feed his whelps, and his Lyonnesses; *He filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravine.* Thus the Prophet describeth wicked men, providing not onely for themselves, but for theirs, their young Lyons and Lyonesses; *The wildernesse yeeldeth food for them and for their children.*

Further, Some note the Consent of the whole family in wickednesse, from these words; *The wilderness yeeldeth food for them and for their Children*; that is, they all agree together, Master and Servants and Children, all agree together to doe mischiefe, to spoyle and oppresse all they can. Where Parents and Masters are evill, Children and servants are seldome good. It is rare to see hearts united about that which is good, but they are often and easily united in that which is evill. Thus the Lord speaks to *Jeremiah* (Chap. 7. 18.) *Seest thou not what they doe in the Cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? The Children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough to make Cakes to the Queen of heaven*, &c. All were at worke,

 busie

busie, very busie they were about an Idolatrous service, the Children, the fathers, and the women act their severall parts. So here, either they rob'd for their children, or their children were robbers as well as themselves. *The wilderness yeeldeth food for them and their Children.* Job proceeds in his narrative of their sin.

Vers. 6. *They reap every one his Corne in the field, and they gather the vintage of the wicked.*

In the former verse Job spake of the oppression of persons, in this, he speaks of the spoyling of lands and fields; *They*, that is, the wicked, *reap, every one his Corne*, that is, by their servants whom they set aworke (*They reape every one his Corne*) *in the field.*

But you will say, what hurt is there in that?

The meaning is, they reap the Corn which doth not belong to them. The Septuagint give that sence of the text expressely: *They mowe, or reap the ground or field which is not theirs.* And so Mr *Broughton*, *They reap the field that is not their owne*; Or if we keep to our reading; *They reap every one his Corn in the field*; the sence is, whersoever they find a field of Corn for their purpose, they pretend some title or other to it, they must have it as if it were their own. This is their sin, and the affliction of those who are their neighbours.

Agrum non suum ante tempus demessiverunt. Sept:

Agrum non suum de metunt.

Note from it.

That it is a great sin to reap the Corne which we have not sowne, and a great affliction when the Corne which we have sowne is reapt by others.

Job imprecates this punishment upon himselfe, in case he had done, or were guilty, as his friends had charged him, *then let me sow, and let another eate.* (Chap. 31. 8.) And this is threatned (*Isa.* 1. 7.) *Your land strangers devoure in your presence*; that is, they devoure the fruits of it, the Corne which ye have sowed, and the Cattle which ye have bred. (*Micah* 6. 15.) *Thou shalt sow, but not reap, thou shalt tread the Olives, but not anoint thy selfe with the oyle, & sweet wine, but shalt not drinke wine*: others shall come and take it from thee. That Idle servant charged his Master (*Matth.* 25. 24.) *Thou reapest where thou hast not sowne.*

It

It is the misery of some, that what they have sown is reapt by others, and 'tis a wickednes to reap where we have not sowne.

And they gather the vintage of the wicked.

That is, the grapes that grow in their vineyards. Mr *Broughton* renders, *The wicked snap off the vineyard grapes*; they were in the Corne fields before, now they are got into the vineyards.

But how is it said *They gather the vintage of the wicked*: it seems strange that they being wicked should gather the vintage of the wicked? Some take it plainly thus; they oppresse those that are as bad as themselves. And so we may take this note from it.

One wicked man will oppresse another.

Wicked men spare neither good nor bad, neither friend nor foe; They spoyle those that are as bad as themselves; we say a Wolfe doth not prey upon a Wolfe, nor a Lyon upon a Lyon, but it is otherwise with brutish men, they prey upon and devour one another. *Lupus lupum non edit.*

Secondly, *They gather the vintage of the wicked*; that is, of those whom they Count to be wicked, and so fit to have their goods taken from them; they accuse them of wickednes, and put their names in their black booke, as if they were dishoneſt; that's a truth also.

Wicked men often oppresse the Innocent, under a pretence that they are wicked.

We have a great Instance of this about the taking of a vineyard (1 *Kings* 21. 13. 15.) *Naboth* was Innocent and honest; but *Jezabel* hired two men, *to make Oath that he had blaspheamed God and the King*, and he was presently cast out and stoned: his was the vineyard of the wicked, because the wicked had a mind to it: Thus, under a pretence of some evil done, they really do evil: And having brought a false accusation against a man, they proceed to condemn his person and confiscate his estate, as if all were true.

Inter omnia scelerum genera nullum videtur improbius, quam ubi scelere et impietate, & quem ille habent ipse imperitus, & idem opprimendum sibi Judicant. Merc: Vineam ejus.

There is yet another reading, (which we put in the margin of our Bibles) so plaine in the letter, that it needs none of these Interpretations to make it out; *The wicked gather the vintage*; As they tooke away the Corne, so the wine also. We need not wonder,

vient opprimere. Vul:

der, that they were so injuriously busie to take that which was not their own, for they were wicked, and they that are so, make no bones of doing wickedly; a wicked man is ready for any sin, the vile person will speake villany, and act villanously to.

Vers. 7. *They Cause the naked to lodge without Cloathing, that they have no Covering in the Cold.*

Their progress in wickednes is further described by their incōpassionateness and Cruelty; when we see any naked we should Cloath them; but *they caused the naked to lodge without Cloathing.* And they might be said to doe this two wayes. First, by not giving them Cloathing; secondly, by taking away their Cloathing; for by *naked*, we may understand not onely those that are quite naked, but (as was shewed, *Chap.* 22.6.) those also that have but little Cloathing; they took away even that little from them, and so *Caused the naked to lodge without Cloathing.* We see by what steps of wickednesse they proceeded, they not only spoyled them of their Corne and Wine, but pulled their very Cloaths from off their backs; 'tis bad enough not to cloath the naked, but to take away their cloathing, and make them naked, that's worse. And (which they also did) to let them lodge without cloathing is worst of all. *To lodge without cloathing*, notes their continuance in that distressed state. The Prophet rebuking the *Jewes* for their vaine thoughts, puts them this question; *How long shall vaine thoughts lodge within thee?* Why doe ye (as it were) make ready a roome, and a bed for them? So while the naked lodge without cloathing, they continue in nakednesse. It is a great injury to take away a mans *day-cloaths* from his back, but to take away his *night-cloaths* from his bed, is yet more afflictive and injurious. If a man have not cloathing for his body by day, yet if he have cloathing for his bed he may helpe himself, but to cause the naked to lodge without cloathing, what Cruelty is this? And therefore the Law of God provided against it (*Deut.* 24 12, 13.) *Thou shalt not sleepe with his pledge: In any Case thou shalt deliver him the pledge againe, when the Sunne goeth downe, that he may sleepe in his owne rayment* (that is, in his night-cloaths, or bed cloaths) *& blesse thee, & it shall be righteousnesse to thee before the Lord thy God*; That is, God will looke upon this as a righteous act. The Lord was

was very tender in this point, he would not have the poor lodge without cloathing; but some wicked men care not what the poor suffer, they neither regard whether they have any lodging, nor whether they have any cloaths to lodge in. *They cause the naked to lodge without Cloathing*; so *That* (as it followeth in the text)

They have no Covering in the Cold.

The word signifies to Cover as with a vail or with a garment. It is applyed to the pardon of our sins, (*Psal.* 32. 1) *Blessed is the man whose sin is Covered.* Their condition is most sad, who have no covering for their soules, yet theirs also is very sad who have no covering for their bodyes in the Cold. To have no covering in the Cold winter nights, is not onely uncomfortable, but dangerous. Death is a great cold, and it endangers life to have no covering in the cold, or in the frost, which is the extreamity of cold. The word is used to signifie frost, (*Gen.* 31.40) *Jacob* tels *Laban*; *Thus I was, in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night:* קרח *Gelu.*

The Septuagint translate thus; *They take away the Covering of their soul*; what's that, you will say? in a spirituall sence, Christ is the onely covering of the soule, But no tyrant can take away this. Therefore by the covering of the soule here, we are to understand that which is to a man as his life, take away that and you take away his life. The soule is often put for the body, and then the Covering here meant is the Covering of the body, or that covering that is neerest the soule, or neerest life, so that, there is a great elegancy and emphasis in it to say, *They take away the Covering of their very soule*, That is, they endanger their lives by it. Some translate to that sence, *They take away the covering which is next their very skin*, they would not leave them so much as a shirt that's the Covering (in this sence) of the soule. And when we speak of the utmost rigour and cruelty of man towards man, we say, (proverbially) He hath not left him so much as a shirt to his backe. Yet the Prophet expresseth the rigorous cruelty of man to man by taking away that which may much more be called the covering of their soule (*Mich:* 3. 3.) *They eate the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them.* Skin and flesh are indeed the Covering of the soule. To strip the poore to their skin, is to take away the Covering of their soule; How much more to strip off

ἀμφιάσει δὲ ψυχῆς ἀ' ὑπων ἀφείλοντο. Sept.

off the skin from their fleſh, and the fleſh from off their bones. But, to the words of the text;

They have no Covering in the cold.

This hath in it a double Inhumanity; Firſt, to expoſe them to extreame paine, and then to extreame ſhame. Not to have a covering is to be expoſed to ſhame, not to have a covering in the cold is to be expoſed to paine. But what becomes of the poore when they are naked, and have no covering in the cold. The next verſe informes us about that.

Verſ. 8. *They are wet with the ſhowers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a ſhelter.*

Here's the ſhift theſe poor hearts are put to, *they are wet with the ſhowers of the mountains*; that word which we render *wet*, is onely found in this place in the old Teſtament; it notes not onely to be daſht with raine, but to be ſoakt thorough with it. We uſe to ſay of thoſe who are very wet, that they are wet to the skin, but theſe being naked had nothing to wet but their skin, and their skin was (if it might be) ſoaked through with the wet, or they were thorough-wet with the *ſhowers of the mountains*, that is, with thoſe ſhowers which they meet with upon the mountaines; ſhowers gather about high mountaines, there the Clouds engender raine, and there the ſhowers are bred. Travellers obſerve by the eye, how Clouds gather about the tops of mountaines, and that the raine broods there. This is a further addition to the Cruelty of oppreſſors, and the miſery of the oppreſſed; they took away their Cloaths, and turned them out of their houſes naked into the open ayre, and left them to contend with cold and hunger, with all varieties of weather and danger among the mountains. It is ſome help to a man, if he have no Cloaths to cover him, yet to have a houſe to cover him; but to have neither body-cloaths, nor bed-cloaths, nor houſe, nor harbour, how ſad is this! And being thus helpleſſe, the next words ſhew us what a poore ſhift they made.

Eſt autem quale cunq; nuditatis remedium ſi ille qui veſtimentorum operimentum non habet, ſaltem operimento domus non careat. Aquin:

They embrace the rock for want of a ſhelter.

When he ſaith, *They embrace the rock*, his meaning is, they make

make much of it, they are glad of it, for ſo we are of thoſe things which we embrace; inſtead of ſoft warme beds, they were glad of cold hard ſtones to ſecure and ſhelter them from the raine. Againe, *They embrace the rock*; that is, they goe into the holes and clefts of the rock, they had houſes (poſſibly) Pallaces before, but now they are forced to dwell in the holes of the rock.

In as much as *Job* ſaith, they did not onely goe to the rock for ſhelter, and make a ſhift with it, but embrace and hug it, as being joyfull they had it.

Note.

Great afflictions make ſmall comforts very welcome to us.

He that is turned out naked and hath no cloaths to cover him, would be glad to have a thatcht houſe, or the meaneſt Cottage to hide himſelfe in; he that hath no houſe is glad if he can have but the hole of a rock. (*Lam.* 4. 5.) *They who were brought up in ſcarlet embrace dunghills*; he doth not ſay, they are throwne upon dunghills, but they embrace them, they that were bred up in ſcarlet, are now glad of a dunghill to ſcrape in, there to finde a mouldy cruſt to eate, there to pick up an old dirty rag to cover their nakedneſſe with, or old ſhoes to put upon their feete. So it was in the great famine and deſolation of *Jeruſalem*. And ſo it was during the late warres in *Germany*, and the later in *Ireland*. Some have fought and contended for a peece of Carrion, for a peece of a dead Horſe, nay for a peece of a dead man; that which ſtunck above ground, they contended for, and having wonne it, they embraced it and made dainty of it, as of the moſt pleaſant meate. We that are in our fulneſs, and plenty, we that have abundance, ſlight and make light of many good things; but we may ſoon be ſo ſtraitned and put to it, that we would be glad to embrace a rock, or a dunghill, that we would be glad of the crums that fall from our tables, and of the worſt ſcraps we leave upon our trenchers. Thus the old Saints are deſcribed (*Heb.* 11. 36.) glad they were of Caves and Dens, *they wandred in deſerts, and in mountains, and in dens, and Caves of the earth, being deſtitute, afflicted, and tormented*, they were glad to live among the wild beaſts, when they could not live quietly among men. When the wind and the Sun beat upon the head of *Jonah*, the text ſaith, *Jonah was glad of his gourd*, a thing of little value, very meane, and fading in it ſelf;

ſelfe; yet when the Sun ſhined hot, and the wind beat ſtrongly upon him, then he was glad of a gourd, In times of plenty and peace, we are ſcarſe thankfull for goodly houſes, for full tables, and rich Cloaths; But a little and that courſe food will cauſe the hungry to be thankfull. The naked will catch at old rags, and they who have no houſe will embrace a rocke. There is a rocke, a myſticall rock, whom the Saints embrace for a ſhelter, and rejoyce in above all the goodly houſes in the world, yea above this whole world. Chriſt is a rocke to be embraced in our beſt dayes as our beſt ſhelter, and in our bad dayes he is our onely ſhelter. And while we are conſtrained by outward wants to embrace natural rocks for the ſhelter of our bodyes, let us remember, how our inward and ſpirituall wants, doe alwayes conſtrain us to embrace that myſtical rocke, for the ſhelter of our ſoules.

Laſtly, Obſerve.

The cruelty of man to man knows no bounds.

We have ſeene in this context ſeveral ſteps of cruelty, men ravening for their prey like wild beaſts, men invading the harveſt and the vintage of their neighbours, men robbing both the fatherleſſe and the widdow, men pulling cloaths from the backs of the poore, and expoſing them naked to the cold, and to the raine, to the mercy of rocks and mountains. Thus, man who ſhould be a God to man, kinde. mercifull, charitable, bountifull, courteous, proves himſelfe a Devill to man, churliſh, cruell, mercileſſe, yea ſuch that even his tender mercies are cruel. How cruel are their cruelties, whoſe mercies, whoſe tender mercies are cruel!

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 24. Verſ. 9, 10, 11, 12.

They pluck the fatherleſſe from the breaſt, and take a pledge of the poor.
They cauſe him to goe naked without Cloathing, and they take away the ſheafe from the hungry.
Which make oyle within their walls, and tread their wine-preſſes, and ſuffer thirſt.
Which groan from out of the City, and the ſoul of the wounded cryeth out; yet God layeth not folly to them.

JOB ſtill draws out the line of the oppreſſors wickedneſſe, or diſcovers the ſeverall wayes of his oppreſſion; We have ſeene much of his bloody work before, here we have more, even higheſt oppreſſion, oppreſſion devoid not only of all juſtice, but of all humanity; ſuch is that which is next inſtanced in.

Verſ. 9. *They pluck the fatherleſſe from the breaſt.*

They, that is, the oppreſſors before ſpoken of, do it, either with their own hands, or 'tis done at their command by their miniſters and inſtruments.

They plucke the fatherleſſe.

The word notes an act of violence, they lay violent hands upon the *fatherleſs*. Who are meant by the *fatherleſs*, hath been opened more then once already. Here the *fatherleſs* are taken, not largely for any that are deſtitute of help and means, as the word is often uſed in Scripture, but ſtrictly, for children whoſe fathers are lately dead, & they yet in their minority, yea in their infancy, and in the firſt of their infancy, ſucking children, children hanging upon their mothers breaſts; which exceedingly hightens the cruelty of theſe oppreſſors. To uſe any violence to the fatherleſſe, though grown up, is (as hath been ſhewed) a great wickedneſſe, to uſe violence towards fatherleſſe infants is much more wicked; but to pull fatherleſſe infants from their mothers or nurſes breaſt (which is all the livelihood a child hath) this is utmoſt wicked-

neſſe. And this is not on'y an affliction to the children, but to the mother a diſconſolate widdow, who having loſt her husband, is now bereaved of her child alſo. Thus they adde affliction to the afflicted, and ſorrow to the ſorrowfull.

'Tis here enquired, what ſhould move them *to pluck the fatherleſs from the breaſts*, or what their intent might be in this barbarous action?

Some anſwer, That it was their covetouſneſſe which moved them to be cruel; They pull'd the children from their mothers breaſts, that ſo their mothers might be the fitter to doe them ſervice; they would needs weane the children before they were fit, that the mother might be the more fit to labour, and toil for thē; or they pluckt the fatherleſſe from the breaſt, to ſell them and to make money of them; when they had murthered the father, & taken all from the widow, they made their markets of their children So we may interpret that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 10. 2.) *Woe to them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievouſneſſe, which they have preſcribed, to turn aside the needy from judgement, and to take away the right from the poore of my people, that widdows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherleſſe.* So we read, implying that they took away the eſtate of the fatherleſſe, and ſo robbed them. Others give this ſence of thoſe words, that they tooke away the perſons of the fatherleſſe, or more plainly, thus, That they ſtole away fatherleſſe children, and ſold them into ſlavery. There is a generation among us, called *ſpirits*, who pull children from the breaſt, or enveigle away ſuch as know not their right hand from the left, to make merchandize of them. *The ſmell of guine is ſweet to ſome from any thing, even from the ſale of poore fatherleſſe children.*

Secondly, Others read the text thus; *They pluck from the fatherleſſe that which was left after the prey or deſtruction*; for the word which we tranſlate *breaſt*, is derived from a root which ſignifies to *deſtroy or lay waſt*; ſo the ſenſe is given thus; They take away from the fatherleſſe, even that poor pittance which was left after they had made havocke of all that was their fathers.

שד *mamma, etiam vaſtitas a* שדד *vaſtavit. Rapiunt pupillo id poſt vaſtationem relictum eſt.* Tigur.

And take a pledge of the poore.

What a pledge is hath been opened (*Chap.* 22. 6.) The words may alſo beare this tranſlation, *They take that which is upon the poore*

poore for a pledge, namely, their raiment, not onely the cloaths which they have by them to ſpare, (a poore man may have a little change) but the cloaths which they actually weare, How contrary this practice was to the Law, hath been ſhewed before, which forbad to take a pledge of ſuch things, as without which the poore cannot conveniently ſubſiſt.

There is a third reading, which ſaith not as we, *they take a pledge of the poore*, but, *they take the poor for a pledge*. Of which cruelty we read (*2 Kings* 4. 1.) where the poore widdow complained to the Prophet, that her husband being dead, the creditors were come, and *had taken her two ſons to be bond men*. Thus here when they had gotten their cattle (as was ſhewed before) and their cloaths from their backs, then they muſt have their bodies too, to be ſlaves and drudges. Here firſt, I might note, That the ſin of oppreſſion is aggravated in reference to the perſons upon whom it is exerciſed. But becauſe it hath been obſerved from other paſſages both of this and former Chapters, how ſinful it is to oppreſſe thoſe, whom we are bound to relieve, and to vex thoſe, whom we ought to comfort; I ſhall not inſiſt upon it in this place. But

Obſerve, Secondly.

That covetouſneſſe knows no bounds.

As it hath been ſaid of envy, ſo we may ſay of covetouſneſſe, *Covetouſneſſe whether wilt thou?* whether wilt thou lead, or rather hurry and force worldly men? covetouſneſſe carryes thoſe who are under the power of it no man knows whether: who can tell where he ſhall ſtop or ſtay when he is once under the power of the ſpirit of covetouſneſſe? ſuch will not ſpare either the fatherleſſe, or the widdow, not the cloaths upon their backs, no nor their backs nor bodyes. If a covetous eye can but diſcerne any advantage to be made, it will have body and all. There is no ſin ſo hainous none ſo baſe, and ſordid, but covetouſneſſe may be both the mother, and nurſe of it. A covetous man will not forbeare either for the cruelty of the ſinne, or for the ſordidneſſe of it; Covetouſneſſe is a ſordid luſt; Covetouſneſſe is earthy, and muds our ſpirits in earthly things. When the ſpirit of a man is once embaſed by covetouſneſſe, he is ready to do any baſe thing. There is nothing here below, lower then that Spirit. And hence

the Apostle concludes (1 *Tim.* 6. 10.) That *the love of money* (which is covetousnesse) *is the roote of all evill*, that is, any evil of sinne may grow up from that roote; and therefore the Apostle adds in the same place, *That, while some have coveted it; they have erred from the faith.* Covetousnesse is the roote of heresie, which we may think farre removed from it. But (saith he) such have erred from the faith; which may be understood of erring from the faith, both in regard of practice, and of doctrine, They have both acted and beleeved against the rule of faith for filthy lucre; and so have peirced themselves through with many sorrows. Covetousnesse runneth us into all evill, and provokes many to do such things as peirce themselves through with many sorrows as well as others. Covetousnesse peirceth the poor and needy, the widdow and the fatherlesse with many sorrows, nor doth it spare its own Master, or slave rather; but peirceth him likewise through with many more and much worse sorrows.

Vers. 10. *They cause him to goe naked without cloathing.*

The 7th verse spake the sence of this; *They cause the naked to lodge without cloathing, and they have no covering in the cold.* *Job* toucheth upon their cruelty againe and againe. *They cause him to goe naked without cloathing.* They will not allow him so much as those things which are for necessity. The word *him*, is not expressely in the Hebrew, which runs only thus; *They cause to goe naked without cloathing*; as implying, that they were ready to exercise this inhumanity upon any one that came next to hand or stood in their way. Our Translation seemes to referre it to those poor taken for a pledge, and so the difference between this 10th and the 7th verse is this; in the 7th verse he spake generally of the poore, whom they made to goe naked; here at the 10. verse he speaks of those whom they had taken to be their slaves, and servants; *they take the poor for a pledge, and cause him to goe naked without cloathing*; they take his worke, but they give him no cloathing, they command his labour, but deny him reliefe. Which sense is carried further, both in the next verse, and in the next clause of this verse.

And

And take away the sheafe from the hungry.

Some render, they take away *the eares of corne*, that is, the gleanings which the poor have pickt up and gathered together; They take away the very gleaning from them, & that two wayes, either, First, they will not suffer the poore to gleane after their reapers; This is to take away the eares of corn from the hungry; such is the cruelty of some, that they will not suffer the poore to gleane in their fields. or, secondly, when the hungry have gleaned a few eares of corn, they take all away from them. Against which cruelty to the poor the Law of *Moses* provided, *Deut.* 24. 19, 20, 21. *When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheafe in the field, thou shalt not goe againe to fetch it, it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherlesse, and the widdow, that the Lord thy God may blesse thee in all the worke of thine hands.* Now if the forgotten sheafe must be left for the poore, surely the scattered eares must not be raked up from them. We have an eminent instance of the liberty of gleaning in the second Chapter of *Ruth*.

עמר *non solũ manipulum integrum sed pauculos spicas quæ messoris manum effugere solent significat.*

Againe, By *the sheafe which is taken away*, we may understand that little corne which the poor man hath of his own growing in his owne field. And *Job* speaks in the singular number, *the sheafe*, implying that the poor man hath not many sheaves, his corne makes but a sheafe as it were; as the poor man in the parable (2 *Sam.* 11. 11.) had but one lambe, he had not a flock, so the poor man hath but a sheaf, he hath not many sheaves, and shocks of corn, he hath not barnes full, as the rich man is described, *Luke* 12. he hath but a sheafe, yet they take that away.

Thirdly, The word which we translate, *sheafe*, signifies a measure which did containe a convenient quantity for a dayes provision; This measure the *Jewes* call an Omer (*Exod.* 16. 16.) *This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, gather of it every man to his eating an Omer for every man according to the number of your persons, take ye every man for them which are in his tents, ye shall have an Omer for every man*; So that an Omer contains a convenient quantity for one mans provision for a day, & then the sense ariseth thus, *they take away the Omer from the hungry*; that is, *they take away meere necessary food or daily bread from the hungry.* The poor man hath but an Omer, just enough for a day, as our Saviour teacheth us to pray, *Give us this day our daily bread*, or the

Est autem Gomer mensuræ genus quod quotidianũ dimensum & diurnũ victum hominis capere potest, ergo necessarium victum abstulerunt famelicis quem forte & spicis minutatim collectis sibi sumo labore collegerunt.

Pined.

the bread of our necessity, so much bread as will suffice us for a day, our Omer; how much soever we have we are to ask no more, and usually poore men have no more. The rich have food aforehand, or food for many dayes or yeares, as he said to *his soule* (Luke 12.19.) *soule thou hast goods laid up for many years*, he was before-hand with the world; but the poor man hath only enough for a day, if he hath that, and that these oppressors took away; *They take away the sheafe, or the Omer from the hungry.*

The hungry is put for *the poore*; and to aggravate the sinne, 'tis said, *they take away the sheaf from the hungry*; That is, before the poor man hath eaten his belly full, yea before he hath broken his fast, they finde the poor man hungry, and so they leave him; for they leave him nothing to appease his hunger with; *They take away the sheafe (the Omer) from the hungry.*

There is yet a fourth reading, *and those that carry their sheaves they make to goe away a hungry.* The meaning is, Their labourers in harvest, or *their harvest men* have no provision made for them, they work all day, and are sent home hungry at night. Which sin is more expressly noted in the next verse, where Job taxeth the wickedness of those Masters who are forward enough to imploy poore labourers, but are backward to give them a reward, or rather keep back their reward, altogether.

Vers. 11. *Which make Oile within their walls, and tread their wine-presses, and suffer thirst.*

The last reading of the 10th verse joynes fitly with this verse; *Those that carry their sheaves they make to go away hungry*, and *those that make oyle within their walls, and tread their wine-presses suffer thirst*, they are both hungry, and thirsty, who do their worke.

Which make oyle within their walls.

The word which we translate, *to make oyle*, signifies *light or noon-day* in the nowne, and in the verbe to be abroad in the light of Sun about noone day. And hence the words are thus translated by the vulgar latine; *They noon it among the heapes*, or *they are abroad among the heapes at noone.* And there is a double exposition given of the words in this translation; first they are expounded

Meridiati sunt inter acervos. Vulg:

expounded of the wicked themselves who oppresse the poore; as if he had said, *They come forth to please themselves, and take the aire, or to Sun themselves among the heapes of those things which they have taken from others by oppression.* But I conceive this very unsutable to that which is joyned with it in this vers. Their treading of their wine-presses and suffering thirst. And therefore I lay it by.

Secondly, The words in this translation are expounded of the poore, *They abide till noone day, or till the heate of the day among the heapes*; that is, among the sheaves, or among the oyle-fats, or among the wine-presses; poor men labour there unto the very heate of the day, and then are turned home hungry and thirsty, without meate or drink or any thing to procure either.

We translate, *which make oile*, and the same word signifies, *noone-day, light, and oile*, because of the light, and splendidnesse of oyle. The eye enformes us, that oyle is a cleare body which hath much light, and purity in it; and therefore the word is applicable unto either, *which make oile*

יצהירו *meridiani sunt, vel oleum fecerunt tam meridies quam oleum a splendore & puritate dicitur Hebraice. Est enim* צהר *splendere. Vel quia oleum accensum facit ut meridies.* Aben-Ezra.

Within their walls.

There is a twofold exposition of these words, *within their walls*, that is, say some, *within their own walls*; the poore make oyle within their walls, and tread their own wine-presses, yet they suffer thirst; that is, the poor are so oppresst by the rich, that all the wine, and oyle they can make for themselves, will not satisfie their ordinary thirst or necessity, or when the poore have made wine and oyle within their own walls they suffer thirst, that is, the rich come, and take all from them. Thus we may enterpret it of the poore making wine, & oile for themselves; For in those Countries where Vines and Olive-trees abound, the poore have their quantity, and portion of wine and oyle, as here they have of corne or any other commodity, which is of the growth of this Country.

But I rather expound the whole verse of the poore making oyle for, and treading the wine-presses of the rich. The poor labour for the rich, making oile within *their walls*, or *within their ranks*, that is, among their Olive-trees they grow in rankes, and tread their wine-presses, yet *they suffer thirst* that is, though they labour hard for them, yet they have nothing for their labour, they make oile but they have no oile to anoint themselves, they make wine,

wine, but they have no wine to quench their thirſt; thoſe cruell men neither gave them wine nor oyle (in ſpecie, or) in kind, but uſed them as Poets feine of *Tantalus*, who was ſet in a river of water up to his chin, but could not reach it, ſo the rich Tantaliz'd the poor, calling them to worke all day in their oyle fats, and wine-preſſes, and yet ſent them home hungry and thirſty; or they ſent them home without that which is virtually or amounts to wine and oyle, that is, their wages, or reward, they gave them not that which their ſervice deſerved. This is that ſpeciall oppreſſion, which, I conceive, *Jeb* intended in this place, both to diſcover and reproove, the unconſiderableneſſe and cruelty of the rich towards the poor labouring man.

Hence obſerve.

That to deteine the wages of the labouring man is a provoking oppreſſion.

When men carry ſheaves, and yet are hungry, when they make oyle, and tread the wine-preſſe, and yet ſuffer thirſt, this is a crying ſinne. The Lord forbad this expreſſely (*Deut.* 24. 14, 15.) *Thou ſhalt not oppreſſe an hired ſervant, that is poore, and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of the ſtrangers which are in thy land, within thy gates, at his day, thou ſhalt give him his hire, neither ſhall the Sun goe down upon it, for he is poore, and ſetteth his heart upon it, leſt he cry againſt thee to the Lord, and it be ſin unto thee.* The Law alſo ſaith (*Deut.* 25. 4.) *Thou ſhalt not muzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corne.* Which though the Apoſtle applyeth in two places (1 *Cor.* 9. 9. 1 *Tim.* 5. 18.) to ſhew the equity of it, that they who labour in the word and doctrine, or preach the Goſpel (which is ſpirituall food, the food of ſoules) ſhould be comfortably ſupplyed with temporall food, the food of their bodies (though, I ſay) the Apoſtle doth peculiarly apply it to this ſort of labourers, yet it is extendible to all honeſt labourers in what kind or way ſoever. For if the mouth of the labouring oxe ſhould not be muzled, then much more the mouth of a labouring man ſhould not be muzled, that reaps the corne, and treadeth the wine-preſſe, that is, ſuch ſhould not be ſent away hungry and thirſty. The Prophet (*Jer.* 22. 13.) thunders out a threatning againſt thoſe who deale thus with the labourer; *Woe to him that builds his houſe by unrighteouſneſſe, and his*

his chambers by wrong, that uſeth his neighbours ſervice without wages, and giveth him not for his worke. As ſome unrighteous men build chambers and houſes with the gold and ſilver which they have wrongfully gotten from the rich, ſo ſome build their houſes by getting the labour and pains of the poore wrongfully from them, that is, by denying them the wages which is due for their worke; *Woe to ſuch ſaith the Lord.* And againe (*James* 5. 4.) the Apoſtle chargeth this upon the rich, *Behold* (ſaith he) *the hire of the labourers, that have reaped downe your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth; and the cryes of them which have reaped are entred into the eares of the Lord of Sabaoth, or of the Lord of hoſts*; As if he had ſaid, the Lord who hath all the Armies of heaven and earth in his power, even he hath taken notice how ye wrong the labourer, and he will put forth his power to avenge their quarrel; The Lord of hoſts is the poore labourers friend, and he will be his Avenger. It is a ſin crying for vengeance, that when a poore man hath ſweat out his ſtrength to doe ſervice to the rich, he ſhould not have his wages given him to renew his ſtrength, and revive his ſpirits for further labour. The Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.* 3.) gives a charge *that they that will not labour ſhould not eate*; *we heare* (ſaith he) *that there are ſome who walk among you diſorderly, working not at all, now then, they that are ſuch we command and exhort by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſſe they worke and eate their own bread*; and (*ver.* 10.) *If any will not worke, neither ſhould he eate.* But as they that will not worke have no right to eate; what they eate, they ſteale: ſo they who worke ſhould eate, elſe they are deprived of their right. Woe be to thoſe who eate, and work not in ſome kind or other, and woe be to thoſe who doe not give them to eate who work, who compel or but call the poore to treade their wine-preſſes, and then let them ſuffer hunger and thirſt.

This ſin is committed not only by the total denying of reward, and wages; that's the groſſeſt way of it; But,

Firſt, This ſin is committed, when the poor man receives not a reward proportionable to his labour, when he hath not what anſwers his worke, but is wages is ſo ſcanty, and ſhort, that he is not able to make a living of it for the comfortable (according to his degree) maintaining of his charge: many are apt in this caſe to oppreſſe the labourer while they pay him. They will give him ſome-

ſomewhat, but it ſhall be ſo ſhort, and poore, that he is not able to ſubſiſt upon it. Hence that common ſpeech among us, *that there is nothing cheap but poor mens labour*; men care not ſo their work be done, though the workman be undone. They care not though the ſweat of his brows will ſcarſe (as 'tis uſually phraſ'd) find him water to waſh his hands.

Secondly, This ſin is committed when the labourer is defrauded of that which hath been agreed for, when cavills are raiſed and ſo the hire detained. This the Apoſtle *James* reproves, (*Chap.* 5. 4.) ſpeaking of the labourers hire, which (ſaith he) *is of you kept back by fraud*; they did not tell them plainly they ſhould have no wages, but they quarrelled with them about their worke; ye have not done your worke well, or not ſo ſoon as ye ſhould, and therefore they will not pay them, or they pay them to halves. Thus ſome by fraud and cavills detaine the labourers hire, as others doe it by open violence, or flat denyall.

Thirdly, This ſin is committed by delaying to pay the labourer. We find in *Moſes* Law (the equity whereof remains to this day) that not onely the denying, or defrauding of the labourer concerning his hire, is charged as ſinfull, but the very delaying of it. Suppoſe you pay all, at laſt, yet if you cauſe the poor to wait long for what is their due, this will be reckoned an oppreſſion: therefore ſaith the Law (*Deut.* 24. 14, 15.) *Thou ſhalt not oppreſſe an hired ſervant that is poore, and needy, at his day thou ſhalt give him his hire*, (Thou ſhalt not oppreſſe him ſo much as by deferring it for a day) *neither ſhall the ſunne goe downe upon it.* Conſider how ſtrict the righteous Lord, and our great Maſter is in this poynt, That Maſters ſhould deal well with their ſervants, and day-labourers, The Sun muſt not goe downe upon it, Why, *for he is poor, and ſets his heart upon it.* Which is not to be underſtood like that (*Pſal.* 62. 10.) *If riches increaſe, ſet not thy heart upon them*, that is, doe not fix your affections upon your riches, think not your ſelves happy becauſe ye are rich: but when *Moſes* ſaith, *the poore labourer ſets his heart upon it*, the meaning is this, the poor labourer having wrought hard all day, thinks of his wife, and family, for whom he is to provide, and then remembers that at the evening he ſhall have his wages. I (ſaith he) ſhall have ſomewhat at night, though I worke hard all day; therefore ſaith the Lord, *give it him at his day, let not the Sunne goe downe upon*

Minus ſolvit, qui minus tempore ſolvit.

upon it; he reckons to have it when he goeth home, therefore diſappoint him not. *It may be a dangerous thing to be a labourers purſe-bearer for a night, if he deſire to have his hire, and you able to pay it*; to detine his wages upon thoſe termes is ſinfull, for he hath ſet his heart upon it, and fully expects it; therefore diſappoint him not, doe not make him aſhamed of his hopes. This is the ſin which *Job* deſcribes here, the wicked take, ye exact worke of the poore, and then take or deteine their wages alſo. They muſt *make oyle for them, and tread their wine-preſſes, and ſuffer thirſt.* This ſin cryeth, and this oppreſſion makes the poore groan, as it follows in the next verſe.

Verſ. 12. *Men groan out of the City, and the ſoul of the wounded cryeth out, yet God layeth not folly to them.*

This verſe ſhews two things; firſt, the ſad effects of oppreſſion, it makes men groan and cry; ſecondly, the frequent and long impunity of oppreſſors; *yet God layeth not folly to them.*

Men groan out of the City.

They vex not onely the Country, but the City too; for as before he deſcribed Country-oppreſſors, ſo now City oppreſſors; oppreſſion is a ſinne that filleth both City and Country: and here we have, as it were, the concluſion, or a kind of acclamation upon the whole matter. Would you know what work theſe men make; they are ſo high in their cruelty, *that men groan under it.* The word which we tranſlate *to groan*, doth not ſignifie any kind of groane (for ſome cry before they are hurt) but that which is cauſed by the greateſt hurt, and comes from the very bottom of the heart, even ſuch a groan as they give forth who are about to dye. *Men groan from*

Eſt velut epiphonema ad ſuperiora.

נָאַק *clamare non quoquo modo ſignificat ſed eam ſingultu ut ſolent morituri.* Merc.

Out of the City.

This ſhews the impudence of thoſe men in ſin as well as their impunity. We might reaſonably ſuppoſe, they would not dare to doe thus in the open City, though they had done it in a corner of the Country, where there were but few to take notice of them. To do thus in the City, in the eyes of all men, is an argument that they had loſt their modeſty, as well as their honeſty, and were reſolved

solved not onely to doe evill, but to stand to it, or make it good.

And the soul of the wounded cryeth out.

That is, the wounded cry out; the soul is put for the person, or the man; or the soul of the wounded is said to cry out, to shew the greatnesse and dolefullnesse of the cry. As when *Mary* said; *My soul doth magnifie the Lord*, it argues that she magnified the Lord with strong affections, as if she had been all soule. Such also is the force of that passage in *Deborahs* Song (*Judg.* 5. 21.) *O my soule, thou hast troden down strength*; she trod downe the strength of the enemy with all her strength. And her soule (which was her strength in God) was in it more then her body. So here, *the soul of the wounded cryeth out*, that is, the wounded cry out most lamentably, they powre out their own souls, while others were powring out their blood. But what are these wounded? or how were they wounded? We may take it either of an outward or inward wounding. There is a wounded spirit as wel as a wounded body, many are wounded whose flesh is whole, who have not so much as a scarre made in their skin; yet here the wounded were such whose flesh or outward state was wounded first, and then their hearts or spirits were wounded, because of that, with griefe and sorrow.

The soule of the wounded.

The word which we translate *wounded*, signifies two things. First, that which is prophane and polluted, and in the verb to pollute and prophane a thing. Idol-worshippers are so called, because they are polluted as wounded men with blood. And hence also it is used as a word of abomination, *The Lord forbid*, said *David*, (1 *Sam.* 24. 6.) And againe (2 *Sam.* 20. 20.) *Farre be it from me, farre be it from me*, said *Joab*; in both which places, the actions abominated, had the defilement or pollution of blood in them. And the *Jewes* speaking this word, usually rent their garments, shewing the abhorrence and indignation of their minds at blasphemie, or such like abominations. Now because wounded men are defiled in their blood, therefore this word signifieth *the wounded. The soule of the wounded cryeth out*, not onely cryeth, but cryeth out; Which implyeth the greatnesse of their wound, and the extreame painfulnesse of it.

חללים *polluti prophani* חלילה *absit, vox prohibitionis & abominationis res prophana sit mihi.*

Hence

Hence Note.

Oppression is a crying sin, and makes the oppressed cry.

The blood of *Abel*, who was the first man that ever was outwardly wounded, cryed when he was dead; how much more do they cry whose blood is powring out, and themselves under present fear of death. The souls under the Altar *cryed how long Lord, how long*, (Rev. 6. 9.) Those soules had suffered, and were past suffering yet they cryed out for vengeance upon their adversaries how much more will their soules cry who are under sufferings? The wounds of the wounded are as so many, wide mouths crying out to God, though their own soules should be silent and say nothing. I have upon other passages in this book met with the sin of oppression, and the cry of the poore upon it, therefore I shall not further stay here, but a while insist upon the last clause of this context, which holds out the chief and most considerable matter of it. The oppressor doth all these wickednesses, but what doth God? Surely we might expect to hear of God in the next words, healing and helping the wounded who make this cry, and wounding the hairy scalpe of those who made them cry; had not God a fit occasion put in his hand to shew himselfe? first, for the releife of the oppressed; and, secondly, for the punishment of the oppressor. He that beholds such actings as these, the fatherles plucked from the breasts, the poore made slaves, the labourer denyed his wages, the wounded crying, groaning, (he I say, that beholds all this) might say in his heart, surely now God will presently appeare, and indeed God hath often appeared, when the wicked have been in the heate of such actings, and the poore in the heat of such sufferings. (*Psal.* 12. 5.) *For the oppression of the poore, for the sighing of the needy, now I will arise saith the Lord, I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.* Yet here we find no such thing, nothing like the Lords arising for the saving of the poore from oppression, or for the breaking of oppressors. *Job* saw or had seen the poore oppressed, and the needy sighing, but did not see God coming either with deliverance or revenge? for he adds, though all this be done,

Yet God layeth not folly to them.

Master *Broughton* reads; *And the puissant marketh not the unsavory.*

savory dealing. His meaning is not that God did not know that their dealings were unsavory, or that he did not observe and take notice of their dealings, but he did not observe them, so as to appeare presently against them. *God layeth not*, or *God putteth not*, the meaning is, God imputeth not, or God chargeth not *folly*, or (strictly to the letter of the Hebrew) that which is unsavory to them or upon them. That word which signifies a thing unsavory or without salt, in a naturall and proper sence, may elegantly be rendred *folly* in a moral or metaphoricall sence; for foolishnes or folly is that, which hath no salt of reason, righteousnesse, justice, or equity in it. Hence the word is often used to signifie that which is done besides, without, or against all these. So it is said (*Chap.* 1. 22.) *In all this Job sinned not, neither did he charge God foolishly*, or, *neither did he charge folly upon God*; it is this word. *Job* did not think that God dealt unjustly or unreasonably with him, though he had taken all worldly comforts from him, and heaped all those afflictions upon him. And here *Job* saith, *God layeth not folly to wicked men*, notwithstanding all the unjust and unreasonable things which they have done, in heaping troubles causelessly upon the poore. Though aboundance of folly and madness was committed and acted by them, with a high and heavy hand, yet *God did not lay folly to them*.

תפלה *quod sit præter omnem rationem & æquitatem.* Bez:

Some reade the text thus; *Notwithstanding all this, God doth nothing that is unsavoury*; we supply those words, *to them*; the Hebrew text is onely this, *God putteth not folly*, so the last mentioned translation may well stand; for when *Job* had reported all those things, it might well be questioned, how is it that God permits, and suffers such wickednesse in the world? O, saith *Job*, *God puts no folly, or he doth nothing which is unjust, or unreasonable in all these things*; as if he had said, *how unreasonable and unrighteous soever men are in these actings, yet God is not unrighteous, God doth nothing unbecoming himselfe, nothing unseemly or unsavory in it selfe*; Severall of the Jewish Doctors fall in with this translation; *God doth not this* (gratis or) *without cause* (saith one) He hath aboundant reason to let that be done, which men doe without either rule or reason. A second renders thus; *God doth not that which is defective or wanting in any circumstance of Justice and equity*. The sence of both which rendrings or paraphrases of the text, are given in fully in the Annotations of a moderne writer upon

Non ponit insulsum. q. d. nihil sine maxima sapientia agit, vel permisit faciendum deus.

Deus non facit hæc gratis & frustra, i. e. non temere & absq; ratione. Rab: Abr:

Deus non ponit imminutionem. i. e. rem defi-

upon it. *God* (sayth he) *doth nothing uncomely or blame-worthy, while he suffers all these things to be done, which are not onely uncomely and worthy of blame, but abominable, and worthy of the severest punishment.*

cientem aliqua vel justitiæ vel æquitatis circumstantia. Rab. Kimhi.

Deus nihil absurdum aut reprehensione dignum agit, dum hæc omnia permittit. Pisc.

Hence observe.

Whatsoever God doth, he doth it wisely and justly.

God who is wisdome and justice it selfe, and is to himselfe and all others, the rule of wisdome and justice, can no more doe any thing unwisely, or unjustly, then he can cease to be wise or just; and he can no more cease to be wise or just, then cease to be, for his wisdome is himselfe, and his Justice is himselfe. There needs no more to be sayd, to acquit any action of weaknes or unrighteousnes, then to say, God hath done it. *For* (as the Apostle speakes, 1 *Cor.* 1. 25.) *The foolishnesse of God is wiser then men, and the weaknesse of God stronger then men*; We may say also (and in saying so, we say no more then the Apostle sayd before) that, *The injustice of God, is juster then men*, that is, those things which God seemes to doe unjustly and unrighteously: As when he suffers wicked men to devoure the man that is more righteous then they, this seemes to be an act of unrighteousnesse, yet this is juster and more righteous, then the justice and righteousnesse of men. And if the very unrighteousnesse of God (that is, what appeares to man as unrighteousnesse) be righteous; Then how righteous is the righteousnesse of God? That I meane which appeares righteousnesse in the eyes of all men. This reading and sence of the words, is safe, and holds out an excellent poynt of truth.

That God doth nothing which is unsavory or unjust.

Yet our translation is both profitable and clearly suitable to the context, and therefore I shall a little insist upon that.

Yet God layeth not folly to them.

As if he had said, *These men doe most unsavory and foolish things, yet God doth not charge folly upon them.* The sence of this translation riseth by foure steps.

First, God doth not presently call evill men to an account, or charge their sinne upon them.

Secondly, God doth not presently punish evill men for their sin.

sin. To lay folly to a man is not onely to call him to answer for what he hath done, but to punish him as having done foolishly. He looks for a sentence next who hath already received his charg, and is not able to acquit himselfe, and wipe it off.

Non potuit deus prohibitionem Vatabl: *in Habraeo est insultatio: i.e. nihil aliud verba sonant in grati illius cidere patitur.* Vatabl: *Quasi insultum significet mala natura palato malè grata tribulationes quas Deus im, iorum cenatibus opponere possit.* Eold:

Thirdly, God doth not presently stop evill men in their work, or make their worke like the work of a fool, which seldome prospers, or proves successefull. The Prophet *Jeremy* complained of this to God (*Chap.* 12. 1.) *Why doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they happy, that deale very treacherously?* As if he had said, Lord, why doest thou not send out a prohibition from thy Court above, and stop the proceedings of wicked and treacherous men? they goe on smoothly, they meet with nothing in their way, but carry all before them, they meet no rubs that doth disgust or distast them. A stop in our way is to our spirits like hard and unsavory meate to our stomacks, that which we cannot digest. Thus (saith *Job*) *God doth not lay folly to them*, he doth not make them like foolish builders that begin but are not able to carry on their work. God laid folly (in this sence) to the builders of *Babel*, he checkt and confounded them in their work, so that they left off to build the City (*Gen.* 11. 7, 8.) But many begin a *Babel*, a work of confusion to others, but are not confounded themselves, they not onely begin to build, but finish; They set up the top stone of their work, while many cry, woe, woe to it, and *yet God doth not lay folly to them.*

Fourthly, We may resolve this Negative, *God layeth not folly to them*, into an Affirmative, God lets them go on as if they had done wisely, discreetly, justly. And whereas it is said to Christ in that prophecy (*Psal.* 45. 4.) *Ride prosperously, because of truth, and meeknes, and righteousnes*, God seems to say to them, *ride prosperously, even in deceit, and wrath, and unrighteousnesse; They hate righteousnes, and love wickednes, yet God seems to anoint them with the oyle of Gladnes and successe above their fellowes. God layeth not folly to them.*

Hence note.

First, *The wayes of unrighteousnesse are foolish, and unsavory wayes.*

Whatsoever hath sin in it, wanteth salt in it; Christ saith to his Disciple (*Marke* 9. 50.) *Have salt in your selves, and have peace one with another*; that is, let there be a savour of Christ, a savour of grace, and holinesse, and equity in your own spirits, and be ye sweetly, mildly, amiably, brotherly disposed one to another. They have no salt of wisdome in themselves whose conversation is unsavory and troublesome unto others. Sin and folly are more then like one another, for they are the same. They have no seasoning in them, who have no Goodnesse in them. Righteousnesse is the wisest and the most savory thing in the world, in the account both of God and good men. *The wisdome which is from above,* (saith the Apostle *James*, Chap. 3 17.) *is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be entreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality* (towards men) *without hypocrisie* (towards God) But the wisdome that is troublesome and vexatious, rough and harsh to others, is earthly, sensual, devilish indeed, down right madnesse, absurdnesse, folly. *Solomon* saith, *Oppression makes a wise man mad*; but it will appeare at last, *that the wisest oppressors have been mad*, foolish, saltlesse, and brainlesse men. Such use to flatter themselves, and are often much flattered by others in their projects, and policies, for the onely wise men in the world, but in the end they dye like fooles.

Observe, Secondly.

God suffers oppressors to goe on long before he punisheth them, and he suffers the oppressed to cry long before he relieves them.

God is often pleased to winke, while the wicked sin, and he as often seems to be asleepe while the righteous suffer. Hence that sad complaint of the Church (*Psal.* 44. 23, 24.) *Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord, arise, cast us not off for ever; wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression.* This also caused *David* to cry out (*Psal.* 13. 1.) *How long wilt thou forget me O Lord, for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? how long shall mine enemies be exalted over me?* What, under the oppression of an enemy for ever! while God assures his people (in that parable of the importunate widdow, and the unjust Judge, *Luke* 18.) that he will deliver them, yet he more then intimates that it may be very long before he doth it, *verse* 6, 7.) *And the Lord said, heare what the unjust Judge saith; and shall not God avenge his owne elect who cry to him night and day, though he bear long with them*; that is, though he exercise much

patience towards those tyrants who oppresse his elect, yea and much patience also towards his elect, in regard of their doubts and despondencies of their feare and unbeleefe about his coming to averge and help them against those Tyrants.

Further, Folly imports not only sin, but the greatnes of sin, so that when it is said, *God layeth not folly to them*, the sence (according to this notion of the word *folly*) is, that, though they sin grearly, yet God makes no great matter of it, or he doth not charg their sin upon them, nor punish them for their sin answerably or in proportion to the greatnesse of it, but passeth it by, as if it were onely some infirmity or small offence; *he doth not lay folly to them*, nor doth he let them feele what egregious fools they have been. The word *folly* is used often in Scripture in this sence, to note a notorious sinne (*Gen.* 34. 7.) when the sonnes of *Jacob* came out of the field and heard how their sister had been dealt with, *they were exceedingly grieved, and they were very wrath, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacobs daughter*; that is, because he had committed a great wickednesse in *Israel*. We have the same sin so expresst again by folly (2 *Sam.* 13. 12.) *And she answered him, nay my brother, doe not force me, for no such thing ought to be done in Israel, do not thou this folly*; As if she had said; This is a grievous sin, therefore doe it not. And when the Lord would shew *Jobs* three friends, the greatnesse of their error and mistake in their dispute with *Job*, he calls it folly (*Job* 42. 9) *My servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept; lest I deal with you according to your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right like my servant Job.* Thus we see that great sins whether in practice or opinion come under this censure in Scripture; only we may note that the three texts mentioned expresse folly in another originall word then the present text doth. There is folly enough, great folly in every the least sin, but great sins deserve more to beare the name of folly in their foreheads.

Non ponit stultitiam. i. e. non imputat hic ijs tanquam grande peccatum, hac enim stultitia caret.

Taking folly under this peculiar consideration;

We may observe.

That, as the Lord in this life doth not punish any, no not the worst of sinners, according to the just demerit and dimension of their sins, so he punisheth some, whose sins are very great, but very little.

Though

Though he layeth their sin to them, yet he doth not lay it to them in the folly of it, or as it is their folly. He doth only touch them with his little finger, while it might be thought he would breake them with his iron rod. He doth but chastise them with whips, while their sin calls for scorpions. The time will come, when God will lay folly to every wicked man, and make their sin appeare, in the punishment of it, what now it is in the nature of it, out of measure sinfull. Every impenitent sinner shall then find that his sin is folly, that is, that his sin is very great.

Yet a late learned Expositer upon this Book, conceives, that the sence is abated and diminished in the word *folly*, as if it were a term of extenuation; *God doth not lay folly*, that is, *the least sin* to them; he doth not so much as charge them to have done irrationally, vainly, childishly, or unhandsomely. he doth not onely not deal with them as if they had sinned hainously, but he doth not deale with them as if they had done foolishly. But whether we take the word *Folly*, as implying the greatnes or the littlenes of their sinne; whether we expound it as a terme of diminution, or of aggravation, the sence of the text is not altered: in which *Job* intends onely to shew that though men have done very wickedly, yet God doth not presently render to them according to what they have done. This is true in the first sence of the word, if God doe not lay folly to them, as it signifies a great sin, and this is much more true, if God doe not lay folly to them in the second sence, as it signifies a little sin. And this sence of this latter clause of the verse corresponds fully, with the generall scope of the Chapter, and of the whole Booke. For *Job* argues with his freends thus; *Ye charge me with folly and wickednesse, because I suffer, yet God suffers the wicked and doth not charge them with folly.*

Non ponit stultitiam i.e. non dico scelera, sed negligen quidem aut facta illemita & insulsa illis imputat Coc:

Lastly, I shall onely represent another translation of these words, which keepes strictly to the Hebrew; in which those words, *To them* (as we render it) are not found, but supplyed. And then the text runs onely thus; *And yet God doth not lay folly*, that is, *such things as are uncomely, vaine, and foolish*: As if *Job* had said; *Though I have made report to you of all these oppressive wayes of wicked men, yet I assure you, God will not suffer these evill administrations to continue and be established; but will at last beare his witnes against them, and eminently shew his utter dislike*

Et tamen insulsitatem non designat deus. Jun i. e. tergere seu confirmare non mine persti ngit eos, quia nec deo ne hominis

Bus bonis humanum aliquid ſapientibus probatur. id:

of them as of that which is moſt fooliſh and unſavory, not onely to himſelfe, but to all men, who have any taſt or ſence of that which becommeth man. Let men doe as fooliſhly and unrighteouſly as they will, the purpoſe of God is to rule the world in righteouſneſſe, and in wiſdome. *The Kings ſtrength* (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 99. 4.) that is, the ſtrength of Chriſt (who is called *The King of Kings*, (Rev. 19. 16.) both becauſe he excelleth all other Kings, and ruleth all other Kings, he I ſay) *loveth judgement* (or righteous dealings with all his ſtrength) *and* (as it followeth in the ſame verſe) *he eſtabliſheth equity*; he eſtabliſheth the rule by which others may doe equity, and he eſtabliſheth the acts of equity which others doe; For ſeeing Chriſt loveth judgement, and alſo (as we have it in the cloſe of the ſame verſe) *executeth judgement and righteouſneſſe in Jacob.* He cannot but eſtabliſh acts of equity, which are nothing elſe but the execution of judgement and righteouſneſſe. And therefore though he bear with unjuſt and unrighteous men a while in their veine projectings and vainer actings, yet he will not eſtabliſh them in it. *He will not lay folly*, he will not lay it as a foundation for them to build and proceed upon. Weak and ſmall things have often been eſtabliſhed by God, but he will not long eſtabliſh wicked and ſinfull things.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 24. Verſ. 13, 14.

They are of thoſe that rebell againſt the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.

The murtherer riſing with the light killeth the poore and needy, and in the night is as a Theefe.

Job having given many particular Inſtances of the wicked practices of evill men, ſeems in this 13th verſe to give us a general Character of them; *They are of thoſe that rebell againſt the light*; As if he had ſaid, *Would you know what theſe men are who commit ſuch horrid wickednesſes, who oppreſſe the poore, the fatherleſſe, the widdow; who detaine the hire of the labourer, and ſend them away hungry and thirſty when they have done their worke? would you know what ſort or kinde of men theſe are? I will tell you, They are of thoſe that rebell againſt the light*; that's their genius, or their ſtrain. This general ſence of the words doth very well agree with, and carry on the diſcourſe which *Job* was upon.

Yet others conceive, that in this 13th verſe, and ſo forward, *Job* is deſcribing another ſort of wicked perſons then thoſe formerly mentioned. As if he had ſaid, I have before ſpoken of thoſe open ſinners and ſons of violence, ſuch as ſin'd and cared not who ſaw them, impudent ſinners; but now I will ſpeake of a ſort of cloſe ſinners, or ſons of deceit, who doe their work no whit more honeſtly, yet more modeſtly then the former; *They are of thoſe who rebell againſt the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the pathes thereof, The murtherer riſing with the light killeth the poore and needy*, &c. In which ſenſe ſoever we take the context, the difference is not much, though I rather adhere unto the former.

They are of thoſe that rebell againſt the light.

He doth not ſay, they are of thoſe who have not the light, or they are of thoſe to whom the light hath not ſhined, he ſaith not they are of thoſe who ſit in darkneſs, and in the valley of the ſhadow of death, but *they are of thoſe that rebell againſt the light*, as implying the preſence of the light with them, and their contempt of it.

They

They rebell.

מרד *rebellavit defecit* This word is often uſed in Scripture for rebellion againſt any lawfull authority or power ſet over others to rule and governe them, and that's the Importance of it here, *they rebell*: and from this word *Nimrod* had his name, who was the firſt noted rebell that ever was in the world; *Nimrod* was a great Prince among men, but he became ſo by rebellion againſt God. Here *Job* diſcovers *Nimrods* or rebells againſt the light. But what was the light, againſt which they rebelled?

Light may be conſidered two wayes; Either properly or figuratively; we may underſtand the text of light in a proper ſence, and ſome inſiſt chiefly upon that. *They rebell againſt the light*; that is, againſt the very light of the Sunne, or the ordinary daylight; as if he had ſaid, *If it were in the power of theſe men they would even pull the Sunne out of the firmament of heaven, that they might ſin unſeen.* I will not, as ſome Interpreters do, fix the Expoſition here, though I grant, this ſence may be taken in, wicked men love naturall darkneſſe, and hate even natural light, the light of the Sunne, becauſe it ſeldome ſerves but often hinders their occaſions.

Secondly, Take light figuratively for the light of knowledge, ſo it is more true, that wicked men rebell againſt it: and, that light in this notion ſhould be here meant, the words plainly imply; For though ſome wicked men would be willing to be ſhut of the day light, yet it is hard to ſay they rebell againſt it: and thoſe other paſſages, *not to know the wayes of it, and not to abide in the pathes of it*, are not ſo proper and ſignificant to ſet forth their deſire and endeavour of avoiding naturall light. So that the light rebelled againſt is rather an Internall light, that light which ſhines into the ſoule, then that which ſhines to the eye; and there is a twofold internall light, againſt which wicked men may be ſaid to rebell.

Firſt, The light of nature, or natural internal light; There is a light of nature, or as ſome call it, a light of the natural conſcience, which every man carrieth about him, concerning good and evil, or what is to be done, and what is to be left undone. The Apoſtle is direct for this (*Rom.* 2. 14.) *The Gentiles having not the Law, doe by nature the things contained in the Law, theſe having not the Law*

Law (that is, the law of God formally publiſhed to and preſſed upon them) *are a Law unto themſelves* (that is, they have the law of nature in common principles and notions of righteouſneſſe in themſelves) *and* (therefore) *ſhew the worke of the law written in their hearts.* Againſt this internall light the wicked rebell.

Secondly, There is a light of divine Revelation, which ſhines into the ſoul from the Scriptures, or written word of God. The word of God is ſo often called light in Scripture, that I need not give particular Inſtances. Divine truths inſpired and dictated by the Spirit of God are there written as with the beams of the Sun. Yet the wicked man rebells, as againſt the light of nature, ſo againſt the light of Scripture, againſt the cleareſt and fulleſt diſcoveryes of the mind of God.

Further, Some by the light againſt which they rebelled, underſtand God himſelfe, *who is light* (as the Apoſtle *John* calls him, 1 *Ep:* 1. 5.) *and in him is no darkneſſe at all.* All that rebel againſt God, muſt needs rebell againſt light, ſeeing God is light. And the very reaſon why the light of nature, and the light of Scripture are rebelled againſt, is, becauſe the former hath ſomewhat of God in it, and the latter much of God in it; For as God is light, ſo all light is of God. And that light which is of God muſt needs be rebelled againſt by wicked men, ſeeing they moſt of all rebell againſt God, who is light and the fountaine of it; for as the Apoſtle *John* argues about love, (1 *Ep:* 5. 1) *Every one* (ſaith he) *that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him.* So we may argue about hatred and the effect of it, rebellion; He that hateth and rebelleth againſt him that begetteth light (ſo God doth, whence alſo he is called the *Father of lights*, (Jam: 1. 17.) he, I ſay, that rebelleth againſt him that begetteth light) hateth and rebelleth againſt that light, which is begotten of him. *They are of thoſe that rebell againſt the light.*

Hence obſerve.

Firſt, *Divine truth is as life.*

As the Sunne gives light to the eye, or outward man, ſo the Spirit of truth gives light by the word to the inner man. When God ſends his word to a people, he ſends light to a people: Chriſt is light, and the word is light, Chriſt in perſon, is the light of the world; the word in doctrine, is the light of the world: The truth

of

of Divine Revelation is many wayes answerable to the light.

First, Light is pure, and beautifull, and the light is so pure, that you cannot impure, or defile it; so is truth: Though many have attempted to corrupt the truth and word of God, and shall at last be dealt with and judged, as they who have corrupted it; yet the truth remains incorruptible, and ever shall. The beauty of it fades not, nor is the purity of it stained, by all the filth of false doctrine which hath been cast into the face of it, from the beginning of the world unto this day.

Secondly, Light is pleasant and delightfull; *Light is sweet* (saith *Solomon*, Eccl. 11. 7.) *and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sunne*: So truth is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing to behold and receive the Sun-light of Divine Revelations, where truth is taken in, it doth even ravish the soule and fill it with unspeakable delights. Truth is as sutable and pleasant to the understanding, as good is or can be to the will and affections. *David* found not only delight, this or that single delight, but all sorts and degrees of delight in the Law of God; And therefore he speaks plurally (*Psal.* 119. 92.) *Unlesse my delights had been in thy law, I had perished in my trouble.* And againe (*ver.* 143.) *Trouble and anguish have taken hold of me; yet thy commandements are my delights.* All his troubles were over-ballanced and conquered by his delights in the law, and all his delights and contentments were Center'd in the Law. That light was so much his delight, that it overcame all worldly darknesse, and did even extinguish all his worldly lights.

Thirdly, Light hath heate in it, and light is accompanied with influences, or conveighs them with it. All living creatures here below are cherished and refreshed, yea and things without life, as Gemms and minerals are concocted and refined with the warmth and vertue of it. And so hath truth; The light of the word carrieth heat and Influences with it, to warm the heart and comfort it, to concoct the grosseneſſe of mans mind and sublimate it into an heavenly purity. *Did not our heart burne within us while he talked with us by the way? and while he opened to us the Scriptures*, said the Disciples of Christs discourse with them, *Luke* 24. 31.

Fourthly, Light discovers and makes manifest; so doth truth, (*John* 3. 20, 21.) *Every one that doth evill hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved*, or (as we put in the Margin) *discovered. Light makes manifest. the word of God* (as the Apostle speaks, *Heb.* 4. 12.) *is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, it discovers that to us, not only in others but in our selves, which we saw not before; we are much if not altogether, unknowne to our selves, till we see our selves in the Glasse of the Word.

Here observe.

Secondly, *The light of truth is Cloathed with Authority, the truths of God have a Soveraignty over man.*

We cannot be said to rebell against any thing but that which hath power and authority over us; a man may oppose and contend with his equall, but he cannot be said to rebell against his equall; we rebell onely against those that are above us. If a child opposeth his father, it is rebellion; if a servant opposeth his Master, it is rebellion, because fathers and matters have authority over their children and servants. All rebellion is the breaking of the bands of subjection And all the bands of subjection are broken when the light is rebelled against, because the light of heavenly truth, is invested with all power and authority over us; it hath a power to lift up and a power to humble or cast downe; It hath a power to convince, and a power to comfort; It hath a power to kill, and it hath a power to make alive; all these powers the light of the word hath. But it hath two powers more especially and eminently.

First, It hath the power of a rule, or power to rule and govern both the hearts and lives of men; the light of the word doth not only offer advice, and give Councel, but it gives out a Command, what the word speaketh we are not upon point of Indifferencies whether we will receive it or no, but upon poynt of duty. Therefore not to receive it, especially to resist it is rebellion; the light of the word is as a King, and where the light of that word comes, there is power, and no man may say, *What doth it?*

Secondly, It hath the power of a Judge; It gives both Law and Judgement. *He that rejecteth me* (saith Christ, *John* 12. 48.) *and receiveth not my words* (The not receiving of the word of Christ, is the rejecting of Christ himselfe, and he that rejecteth Christ) *hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* The word is now the rule of

 living,

living, and it ſhall be hereafter the rule of Judging, Now it is the rule by which we muſt live to Chriſt, and then it ſhall be the rule by which Chriſt will Judge us.

Thirdly, Where it is ſaid, *They are of thoſe who rebell againſt the light*; Obſerve.

Wicked men cannot abide to be ſeene in what they doe, nor do they love to ſee what they doe.

They would neither ſee their wicked practices, nor be ſeen in them. They are darkneſſe, & they walk in darkneſſe. As they walk in the darkneſſe of ſin, ſo they would walk in the darkneſſe of ſecrecy, that others ſhould not ſee what evill they doe, and in the darkneſſe of ignorance, that they might not ſee that what they doe is evill. They are like thoſe uncouth Creatures, Batts, and Owles, that come abroad onely in the night, knowing that if they doe but ſtirre out in the day, all the birds in the aire will gather about them, and hoote at them, becauſe of their ſtrangeneſſe and deformity. And doubtleſſe if wicked men did but ſee the miſhapen and ugly viſage of their own wayes in the light of the word, they would abhorre and run from themſelves as the moſt abhorred monſters in the world, and ſo would all men (who ſee the uglineſſe of ſin in the glaſſe of the word) abhorre them & poynt at them as monſters, did they but ſee them in their ſinfull workes. And hence the Apoſtle (hinting the general diſpoſition of ſinners) ſaith (1 *Theſ.* 5. 7.) *They that are drunken are drunken in the night.* And againe (*Epheſ.* 5. 12.) *For it is a ſhame even to ſpeak of thoſe things which are done of them in ſecret*, that is, when they are out of the ſight of men, and, poſſibly, had it not been that they were out of ſight, or in ſecret, themſelves would not have done thoſe things for ſhame; For though ſome wicked men, as they have caſt off their honeſty, ſo their modeſty too, and act not onely wickedly, but impudently, *the ſhew of their faces teſtifying againſt them, they declaring their ſin as Sodom*; yet as the moſt of ſinners preſume God doth not ſee them when they doe evill, ſo they are unwilling that men ſhould; for though their Conſcience puts no birre to their ſinning openly, yet their credit doth. So that as every wicked man would be glad he did not know that what he doth is evill, and doth what he can to hinder or extinguiſh the light of that knowledge in him, ſo moſt wicked men

men would be glad that no man knew of the evill which they do, and they doe what they can to hinder others from knowing it; as hypocrites love to be ſeen in all the good they do, and would do no good, were it not (as Chriſt aſſures us, *Matth.* 6. 5.) *to be ſeen of men*; They faſt, and pray, and give Almes, and all to be ſeen of men, that is, that men may applaud them, and poynt at them with a Behold (of admiration) There goe the men, The charitable men, The humble men, The devout men; and if men ſee them not, or applaud them not, they are as in the ſhadow of death, they are dead-hearted to every good word and worke. Now (I ſay) as all groſſe hypocrites love the light, or to be ſeen while they are doing good, ſo the moſt prophane and wicked uſually avoid the light, and love not to be ſeen when they are doing evill. For though they are not troubled at the diſhonour they doe to God by ſinning, yet to be diſhonoured among men is a trouble to them. They can eaſily venture their ſoules as to the life to come, but they are afraid to doe wickedly in the ſight of men, leſt they endanger their eaſe and ſafety in this preſent life. That God ſeeth them not is their hope, that men may not ſee them is their care, and that they may not ſee themſelves is their deſire. They are unwilling to know their duty, leſt their conſciences ſhould check them for not doing, or for doing that which is not their duty. Thus in every ſence, *They are of thoſe who rebel againſt the light.*

Fourthly, As rebelling againſt the light, is an argument (as hath been ſhewed) that wicked men deſire not to know what they ought to doe, ſo it teacheth us Further,

That wicked men will doe againſt that which they know.

Men will have fellowſhip with the works of darkneſſe, while their eyes are dazzled with light, if their hearts have not been changed by it. They would be glad if they might never be troubled with the light, but ſuppoſe the light doe come (as many times it doth come whether they will or no) ſuppoſe the light darted upon them ſo clearely and convincingly, that they cannot but ſee and know what they ought, and what they ought not to doe, yet they rebell againſt it; either they will not do what they know, or they will doe contrary to their knowledge. When ſome of the Phariſees were offended at thoſe words (*Joh* 9. 39.) *For*

Judgement am I come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind: What, say they, *are we also blind? Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind ye should have no sin, but now ye say we see, therefore your sin remaineth*; that is, it remaineth in the guilt and aggravations of it. For as they confessed that they saw, so Christ would convince them that they acted against what they saw, or that though they had the light, and so knew their duty, yet they had done contrary to duty. Man breaks through all the light that stands in his way, he breaks through the light both of nature and Conscience, both of the Spirit and Scripture, till himselfe be made light. The Apostle demonstrates the former in the example of the old Gentiles, who though they were under a conviction of the power and presence of God by the works of Creation, and so were said to know God, yet *they did not like to retaine God in their knowledge, nor did they glorifie him as God*, (ver. 21. 28.) but rebelled against that light which shone into their understandings from the creature. And in the second Chapter of the same epistle to the *Romans* the Apostle demonstrates the latter in the example of the old *Jewes*, who though they were under a conviction not only of the power and and presence of God, but of the mind and will of God also, by a divine Revelation, or by the light of the word, yet they rebelled against that word which they boasted of; and while they judged themselves onely in the light, and all the rest of the world in darknesse, they walked in darknesse. *Behold* (saith he, *v.* 17, 18.) *thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will*, &c. But how did the *Jew* answer this knowledge and this boast, read that (*v.* 21, 22, 23, 24.) *Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thy selfe? Thou that preachest a man should not steale, dost thou steal: Thou who makest thy boast of the law through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? for the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.* So that wicked men doe not onely rebell against the light to hinder the coming of it, or to keep it off as long as they can, that so they may not know what to doe, but they rebell against it when it is come, and will doe against what they know.

Fifthly, When 'tis said, *They rebell against the light.*

Observe.

Wicked

Wicked men are not only no friends but professed resolved enemies of the light, they hate and oppose holy truths, or the discoveries of the mind and will of Christ.

They are in open actuall hostility, they take up arms and maintaine a warre against it; not that all wicked men doe expressely send forth their defiance against God and his word, but all wicked men carry this defiance in their hearts, and it is to God as an openly profest defiance, though it be not so to man; God hears the language of their hearts, and he knows that *the wisdome* (or best) *of the flesh is Enmity against himselfe, that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be* (Rom. 8. 7.) That is, while a man continues (as to his spirituall state) under the power & teachings of the wisdome of the flesh, and is unregenerate, as he is not so it is impossible he should (continuing in that state) be subject to the law of God. The law of God will ever continue as holy as it is, and if the heart of man continue as unholy as it is, how shall they agree? A wicked man stands not upon termes of neutrality with the law and light of God, but he is a direct opposite or enemy, he rebells against the light.

Sixthly, Seeing *Job* when he had described all those wickednesses which he saw done, adds this description of the wicked who did them, *they are of those that rebel against the light!* This may be Considered two wayes (as I intimated before) first, as the discovery of a new and a greater sin then any of those particular sins already instanced in; or as a reason why they did break out into those enormous sins; the former consideration yeelds this Note.

To resist or rebell against the light of truth the word of God, is wickednesse in perfection, or wickedness wrought and boyl'd up to the very height.

As God sometimes brings Judgments upon men in perfection, so men sin against God sometimes in perfection. And if any do so, surely, they doe so, who rebell against the light. That speciall sin against the Holy Ghost, of which Christ saith, *It shall never be forgiven*; what is it? but rebellion against the light the highest and cleerest light? and the more cleare and high the light is, the more danger there is of falling into that sin. And hence some

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conceive that before Chriſt came in the fleſh, though there were very high and preſumptuous ſins committed, that yet none of them did amount to that which the Goſpel calls, *The ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*. There was Goſpel-light in thoſe times, but it was under types and ſhaddowes, there was not that cleare light, that cleareſt light which was ſhed abroad at the coming of Chriſt, and therefore there was not light enough to ſin againſt, for the production of that ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, which is not onely the greateſt rebellion againſt light, but is alſo a rebellion againſt the greateſt light. And here conſider by what degrees, ſinning againſt light riſeth unto its full height of rebellion.

Firſt, It is very ſinfull and extreamely dangerous, not to love the light. See how Chriſt thunders againſt ſuch as do not (*John* 3. 19.) *This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkneſs rather then light*: He doth not ſay, men rebelled againſt the light, he only charges them with this crime, that they did not love it, but loved darkneſſe rather. *This*, ſaith he, *is the Condemnation*; that is, this will certainly be matter of condemnation againſt ſinners, that when light came to them, their hearts did not cloſe with it, and embrace it. Now if it be ſo ſinfull not to love the light, what is it to rebell againſt it. It is very poſſible for a man not to love that thing or perſon againſt which yet he doth not rebel.

Secondly, Not to obey, not to ſubmit to the light, is exceeding ſinfull. *Jeſus Chriſt ſhall at laſt be revealed from heaven (perſonally) in flaming fire to take vengeance on them, that obey him not as revealed (doctrinally)* that is, *who obey not the Goſpel* (2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8.) yet it is poſſible not to obey the Goſpel, that is, to forbear an active obedience to that which is Commanded in it, and not to rebell againſt it actively, theſe are diſtinct in themſelvee, though ſeldome, if at all, diſtinct in thoſe that doe them. Now then if there be aboundance of wickedneſſe in not obeying the light, in not doing every thing that the light directs us to; then it muſt needs be a more abounding wickedneſs, when the heart riſes up & rebells againſt it. For though (as was even now intimated) we can hardly divide theſe in their exiſtences, yet we may diſtinguiſh the in their natures, or at leaſt in their degrees, for barely not to obey the light in doing the will of God, is a ſin of a lower ſtature, then a profeſt rebelling againſt it; though in every not doing according to light, there is ſomewhat of rebelling, yet in that which is properly rebelling, there is more then not doing.

Thirdly, It is a great ſin not to ſet a great price upon the light, or not to value it according to its worth; that is, not to value it highly, not to have a high eſteem of it, not to have a higher eſteem of it then of all the Enjoyments and Comforts of this world, is a high provocation. What is it then to rebell againſt it? it is ſinful not to let all goe, not to ſuffer the loſs of all for the light, not to ſuffer even the loſs of life it ſelf for the light, this is extreamly ſinfull. Therefore ſaith Chriſt (*Luke* 14. 26.) *He that will be my Diſciple muſt forſake father and mother*, &c. *yea and his life too*; that is, he muſt be ready to let all theſe goe if called to it, rather then let goe the light or truth of the Goſpel. Now if it be ſo great a ſin not to be willing to ſuffer any loſſe, or to endure any torment in ſtanding up for the light; what is it for any ſoule to riſe up againſt the light, or knowingly to withſtand it?

Fourthly, The Apoſtle ſaith, that our neglect of the light of the Goſpel ſubjects us to utter darkneſſe (*Heb.* 2. 3.) *How ſhall we Eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord*, &c. As if he had ſaid, the wiſeſt man in the whole world, cannot tell how a man ſhould eſcape eternall darkneſs or damnation (there is no poſſible way, no door of hope to eſcape by) if he neglect that great ſalvation. But what's neglect? it is a light paſſing by of a thing, when offer'd; non acceptance, is a neglect. Suppoſe you doe no more, when light is offerred to you, but only paſſe it by, becauſe you have no mind to it, you are not taken with the beauty and worth of it; If you do nothing againſt it, only you do not embrace it, you cannot eſcape. And when the Apoſtle ſaith, *you cannot eſcape*, without ſaying from what; you may ſay the worſt you can or can imagine, and that's it which he meanes you cannot eſcape, even the wrath of God and death eternall. Now if but to neglect ſalvation or the light, which is indeed, onely not to elect it, or not to make it our choice, be ſo damnable a ſin, what is it to rebell againſt the light? to doe which is the worſt that we can doe, even the perfection of wickedneſſe. Surely they who thus rebell againſt the light, *ſhall* (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 49. 19.) *Goe to the generation of their fathers, where they ſhall never ſee light*. They who rebell againſt the light of knowledge, ſhall not enjoy the light of comfort. As they

they have desired the absence of the former light, so they shall be punished with the absence of the latter.

Lastly, As in these words *Job* shews who they were that acted those grosse wickednesses even they who rebeled against the light;

We may observe.

They who rebell against the light, will close with, and embrace any sin whatsoever; or, *They who are all for darknesse, are for any wickednesse.*

They who rebell against this beautifull thing *light*, are forward to embrace the foulest monster; those things which 'tis a shame to speake of, or so much as to name, these rebels against light are ready to doe. The Psalmist moves God in prayer to look to his Covenant by this argument (*Psal.* 74. 20.) *For the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty*; that is, of cruel men, or of men so full of cruelty, that they deserve rather to be called *cruelty*, then cruel, this sort of men inhabit and fill up all those places where the light of holy truth doth not shine. Now if they who want the light, or have no true knowledge of God among them, are hereby (as it were) prepared for and put on to the acting of all manner of wickednesse, how much more are they prepared for the acting of any wickednesse who have thrust the light from them, and are in dark places of their own making. The Prophet *Hosea* shewes (*Chap.* 4. 1.) that where there is no knowledge of God in a land (for want of meanes) there is no truth nor mercy, (that is, there is none exercised) in that land, but oppression, deceit, and falsehood, beare down all: how much more must it be so where there is no knowledge of God in a land, because of the contempt of meanes, and rebellion against the light. What wickednesse will not they do in the dark, who put out the Candle that they may not see what they do? *These are they who rebell against the light*, and as it followeth,

They know not the way thereof, nor abide in the pathes thereof.

These latter words are an illustration of the former.

They know not the wayes thereof.

This not knowing may be taken either for a simple ignorance, when we know not, either because we have not an ability to know, or because we have wanted all opportunities and helps to get knowledge; or, secondly, not knowing may be expounded of a wilfull affected ignorance; *they know not*, that is, they desire not to know: and so I conceive the meaning of *they know not*, is not that they were simply ignorant, or invincibly ignorant, as they are who sit in a land of darknesse, and in the valley of the shadow of death, but that these rejected the land of light, and so were under an affected ignorance; They knew not the truth, because they would not.

Againe, We may be said not to know that, which we doe not delight in, approve and practice. We know no more to purpose, then we presently doe, or have a purpose to do when the season or opportunity calls us to it. How much light soever a wicked man hath, yet *he knowes not the wayes of light*, because he doth not rejoyce or delight in the wayes of light, as also because he doth not so much as approve the wayes of light; and if he neither delight in nor approve of those wayes, no mervaile if he walk not in those wayes, *nor* (as 'tis in the last clause of the verse) *abide in the paths thereof.*

Non nosse vias lucis est non agere ea quæ in luce agi solent.

Illud nescire dicimur quod non probamus.

As if he had said, Suppose they come sometimes into the ways of light and truth, suppose they sometimes doe that which the light directs them to, yet they abide not in it. This is a further Character of the disposition and temper of wicked men, who though possibly for a fit, or for a turne or two they walke in the wayes of light, yet they *abide not in the paths thereof.* And this latter peice of their sinfullnesse ariseth from the former; why do they not *abide in the paths of light*? even because they *know not the wayes thereof*; that is, because they doe not approve or delight in the wayes thereof.

Whence note.

We cannot be constant in that which we doe not affect.

If a man doth not know, that is, love and affect the wayes of light, he will never abide in the pathes of light; what we love, with that we close, what we affect, in that we stick. The reason why the wicked abide in the paths of sin, is because they love and delight in them. All the paths of wickednesse, are paths of pleasantnesse to the wicked, and therefore they abide in them. No man would be at all, much lesse would he be long in a way that he doth not like. And that's the reason why wicked men if ever they doe

this or that particular act of righteouſneſs and holineſſe, yet they cannot perſevere in ſuch actings. A wicked man doth Good as a godly man doth evill, upon a temptation, not upon approbation; ſome carnal aim or intereſt of profit or credit tempts him to doe good, but he doth not approve the good which he doth. And hence it is that as a good man abides not in the paths of darkneſs, ſo a wicked man abides not in the paths of light. True holineſſe doth not begin at action but at affection. They begin at the wrong end with religion, who begin with doing rather then with liking. Many doe this, and they doe that, whereas they ſhould ſtrive to approve, and pray for a love to the truths and wayes of God which they practice; for want of this they often apoſtatize and fall back, even from the practice of them. No bonds can hold us alwayes to the duties of obedience, but thoſe of love to God, and to the things wherein duty calls us to obey. And as want of this love is the reaſon why man is ſo apt to backſlide, & is (ſo far as a Negative may be) the very ſeed and principle of backſliding, ſo it is the reaſon why God gives ſuch up to the power and ſpirit of backſliding. (2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 11.) *Becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved, for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould beleeve a lye.* What is not begun in our affections, will not abide long in our actions.

Secondly, Obſerve.

Not to abide in the pathes of truth and holineſſe, is the mark of an ungodly man.

They who are not what they appear in goodneſſe, will not always ſo much as appear good. They that are (as *Jacob* ſpake of his eldeſt Son *Reuben* (Gen. 49. 4.) *unſtable as water*, ſhall not excell, nor are they to be numbred among *the excellent ones*. The Apoſtle exhorts Saints (1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *To be ſtedfaſt and unmovable, alwayes abounding in the worke of the Lord.* Saints move in the worke of the Lord, but they muſt not move out of the worke of the Lord, *Be ye ſtedfaſt and unmoveable*; but in what? in the worke of the Lord; That is the ſphere in which Saints move, the ſphere of their activity and uſe; and out of that they dare not move. The Sun in the firmament is moving continually, but it is in his proper line, called by Aſtronomers, *The Eclipticke line*; So a godly man is alwayes moving in the way of godlineſs, that's

that's his proper line, and he never moves out of it wholy; He may have (through the power of corruption and temptation) his wandrings and goings aſtray, but then he hath his repentings and returnings into the way againe; he cannot abide long, much leſſe alwayes in the pathes of darkneſſe. He comes to himſelf with the prodigall, and then he comes to his father, he bethinks himſelfe where he is, and comes back into the path where he ought to be; if at any time he walke in the counſell of the ungodly (the gradation is made in the firſt Pſalme) which thing he ought not to doe, yet ſurely he will not (as it follows) *ſtand in the way of ſinners*, or if he ſtand a while in that way, yet, he will not *ſit down in the ſeat of the ſcornefull*; he will not reſt nor ſtay there Now as it is an argument & a mark of Godlineſſe, when a man finds, that th ough he hath many faylings and wandrings, yet he abideth not in the paths of darkneſſe; ſo it is an argument of the naughtineſſe of a mans heart and ſtate, when though he now and then hits upon the doing of a good thing, yet he abides not in the paths of light. Vaine thoughts (as the Prophet Reproves the *Jewes*) lodge in the wicked ſo long, that the Lord complaines, *How long ſhall vaine thoughts lodge in you?* But as good thoughts ſeldome come to an ungodly man, ſo they lodge not at all with him; they are great ſtrangers to him, and he uſeth them as the worſt of ſtrangers, yea as enemies, he quickly turns them off, yea he thruſts them away from him, he abideth not in the paths of light.

Job having thus ſet forth the Spirit of a wicked man, by his rebellion againſt the light, by his unaffectedneſſe with and unſtayedneſſe in the wayes and paths of it; proceeds to give us a further account of his wicked courſes and works of darkneſſe.

Verſ. 14. *The murtherer riſing with the light killeth the poore and needy, and in the night is as a Theife.*

The murtherer is he that killeth a man without warrant and authority; every ſlaying of a man is not murther, but to ſlay a man, or to take away the life of a man without warrant, that's murther: And that's the groſſe ſin forbidden in the ſixt Commandement, *Thou ſhalt not kill, or thou ſhalt doe no murther.* And this is uſually committed either in malice to the perſon or in Covetouſneſſe after the ſpoyle. Some take away the life of a man in

malice to his perſon, they hate him deliberately, as *Cain* did *Abel*, and therefore they kill him. Others have no quarrel to the man, poſſibly they never ſaw him before, but they covet his goods, and that they may rob him of his goods, they rob him of his life. They are ſuch as live upon the ſpoyl, and they will ſpoyl, though they cauſe the innocent to dye for it, and themſelves too in the end. In either of theſe wayes, we may underſtand the murtherer here. The former, becauſe 'tis ſaid in the next words, *He ſlayes the poore and needy, and there is little gaine in their blood when they goe downe into the pit.* The latter, becauſe 'tis ſaid in the latter part of the verſe, *That in the night he is as a theife.* But *Job* firſt ſhews us that this murtherer is a diligent man.

Riſing with the light.

That is, riſing as early, or as ſoon as the light riſeth. The murtherer is no ſluggard, the light doth not finde him in bed; he takes the prime of the morning, he will looſe no time. Men who love hunting riſe early; So do theſe hunters of men. *When the morning is light they practice it*, ſaith the Prophet (*Mich.* 2. 1.) Honeſt men riſe early to goe about the workes of their Calling, and wicked men riſe early to fulfill the luſts of their hearts. *David* ſaith, (*Pſal.* 101. 7.) *I will early deſtroy all the wicked of the Earth*; As if *David* had ſaid, I will riſe with the light to deſtroy the wicked. and here you ſee how the wicked are deſcribed riſing Early to deſtroy the righteous, to murther the Innocent. So the next words expreſſe the deſigne of his early riſing, *He riſeth with the light*; what to doe? no good I warrant you, 'tis

To kill the poore and needy. That's his buſineſſe; He begins his mornings worke with a worke of cruelty; you hear of killing preſently. The murtherers heart is full of blood, and it will not be long ere his hand be full too, for *their feete are ſwift to ſhed blood* (*Rom.* 3. 15.) and they are skilfull to deſtroy. But it may ſeeme that they are not verywiſe for themſelves, though they are very bloody againſt others; For *Job* doth not ſay, they ſlay the fat and full ones, but

The poore and needy.

There are ſome who diſtinguiſh between theſe two, and tell us that in theſe two words, two yea all ſorts of poore are Included. The

The firſt word, they ſay, intends thoſe poore who heretofore were rich, but now empoveriſhed or fallen into poverty; and that by the ſecond word are meant thoſe who have been born and alwayes bred up in a low condition; But we need not ſtand upon ſuch nicities in diſtinguiſhing between the poor and needy. But it may be enquired, why doth the murtherer kill the poor? what doth he get by that? where are the ſpoyls which he brings home? There's nothing to be had from them who have nothing, The poore and needy. And it hath been anciently ſaid, *The empty traveller will ſing before the Theife*; why then ſhould the Theife or the murtherer meddle with, eſpecially why ſhould he kill the poore and needy? *What have they? or what have they done?*

Two things may be ſaid in anſwer to theſe queries; firſt, it is thus expreſt to ſhew the extream wickedneſſe of the murtherer, who doth not care ſo much for booty as for blood. 'Tis for that he thirſts, his delight is in cruelty, therefore he kills the very poor and needy, the next man he meets with, let him be what he will. 'Tis the ſin it ſelfe, or to doe wickedly, which ſome men delight in, they care not whether any advantage or profit come in by it; when they have their will, when they have don what they would, that's reward enough for them.

Hence Note.

Some will doe wickedly though they get nothing by it.

All the true ſervants of God love the work which he ſets them; better then the reward which he gives them, and ſo do ſome ſervants of the Devill. Even the Devill hath ſervants who ſcorn to be mercinary. The act of ſin is ſweeter to them then any profit that ſin can bring in; *They are exact and perfect ſinners, who ſin out of love to the very act of ſinning*: As the higheſt acting in holineſſe is to be pleaſed with pure acts of holineſſe; To do them though we ſhould get nothing by doing them, though we make no earnings, though we ſee no preſent fruit in doing them. Thus (I ſay) to goe on in wayes of holineſſe when the wayes of holineſſe appeare barren and unprofitable to us, yea when they are unſafe and dangerous to us, here's the perfection of holineſſe. So the perfection of wickednes is to be wicked when nothing is got by it; it ſhewes a ſincere love to ſin (as I may ſay) to love ſin for ſins ſake; as it ſhews a ſincere love to Grace and goodneſſe,

to

to love them for their owne or Gods ſake. Hypocrites love the wayes of God for the ſpoyle which they find there, for the carnal advantages which they meet with there; were thoſe wayes poore and needy, leane and empty, they ſhould not at all be filled with their company. The prophane will riſe up in Judgement againſt theſe profeſſors, for *they kill the poore and needy*; They do evill, where they cannot have any hopes of receiving good by it.

Secondly, For anſwer; By *The poor and needy*, we may here underſtand the Innocent and honeſt, not as if all who are poore and needy, were alſo Innocent (for there are many wicked poor) nor as if all who are innocent, were alſo poor and needy (for there are many godly rich) but becauſe uſually they are ſo: men that are rich and great may be Innocent and holy, but theſe are rare conjunctions; uſually the Innocent are poore and needy. Againe, we are not to take the poor and needy for them who (as we ſay) have not a penny to buy them bread, but by the poor we underſtand thoſe of the midle or rather Inferiour rank, ſuch *poor and needy they kill.*

But what's their quarrell at them?

Firſt, Becauſe ſuch poor honeſt men ſtand in the light of wicked men, that is, the wicked cannot be ſo wicked as they would becauſe ſome good men are neere them, and therefore they muſt be removed out of the world, that they may be out of their way. Or, ſecondly, becauſe ſuch poor honeſt men either have given, or are ready to give evidence, or be witneſſes againſt them before the Magiſtrate: now either to prevent or revenge this, they *riſe with the light and kill the poore and needy.*

Hence Obſerve.

That a wicked man will doe his utmoſt to remove thoſe who ſtand in his way, or oppoſe him in his wickedneſſe.

He will kill ſome that he may vex others; that's his aym here, the poore and needy are not his utmoſt ayme; but the poor and needy ſtand in his way, they hinder him in his other projects. And whatſoever interpoſeth between him and the enjoyment of his luſt, he will remove it if he can. And as he will kill ſome that he may vex others, ſo he will much rather kil thoſe who vex him. Holy *David* being left under the power of a ſtrong Temptation, ſlew

ſlew *Uriah* an innocent man, only becauſe he could not perſwade him to do that which might have bin ſome covering of his ſin from the eyes of men. How much more will the prophane do ſo, when honeſt men doe either profeſſedly oppoſe them in their ſinfull workes or diſcover the ſinfulneſſe of them.

Further, In that *Job* upon the freſh account which he gives of the wickednеſſes of men, brings in the murtherer in the firſt place, riſing with the light and killing the poore and needy. We may here take notice, a little, of the greatneſſe of this ſin of murther, and demonſtrate how great a ſinner the murtherer is. The murtherer is a ſinner of the higheſt forme, and there are two Scripture Conſiderations in generall, upon which we may make this out.

Firſt, How ſinfull is it for a man to murther a man, when as the Scripture tels us that if a beaſt kill a man he muſt ſuffer for it: (*Exod.* 21. 28.) *If an oxe gore a man or a woman that they dye, the oxe ſhall be ſurely ſtoned, and his fleſh ſhall not be eaten.* A beaſt is not capable of ſubjection to a morall rule or law, as not being capable of reaſon, yet a beaſt who is not properly under any Law muſt dye for tranſgreſſing this Law, *Thou ſhalt not kill*; And this ſurely, Firſt, to convince man of the greatneſs of this ſin; ſecondly, to admoniſh him leſt he commit this ſin; thirdly, to aſſure him, that if he do he muſt dye; For if a beaſt muſt dye for killing a man, then much more muſt man, ſeeing that Law, againſt the killing of a man, was given to men, not to beaſts.

Secondly, The Lord gave a rule to the *Jewes*, what to do for the removing of the guilt of blood, in caſe a man were found ſlain and no man could tell who was the Author of that murther, read this at large (*Deut.* 21.) from the beginning of the Chapter to the end of the 9 h verſe; *If one be found ſlaine in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and it be not knowne* (after diligent enquiry, or hue and cry) *who hath ſlain him; Then the Elders of thy Judges ſhall come forth, and they ſhall meaſure* (in caſe there be a doubt which City was neereſt to the place where the ſlaine was found) *unto the Cityes which are round about him that is ſlaine. And it ſhall come to paſſe, that the City which is next unto the ſlain man* (for from thence it was moſt probable that the murtherer came, or that thither he was fled to hide and conceale himſelf, therefore) *even the Elders of that City ſhall*

take

take an heifer which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke (therein fitly shadowing the murtherer, in whose stead the heifer was to be slaine; for such are sons of *Belial*, men who will not beare the yoke of obedience) *And the Elders of the City shall bring down the heifer into a rough valley* (the very place was to carry a resemblance of a murtherous spirit, and of the act of murther, both being rough and uncouth) *& shall strike off the heifers neck there in the valley* (implying that if they could have got the murtherer into their hands, he must have dyed under their hand) Then the Priest must come to decide the controversie (*ver.* 5.) and (at the 6th verse) *The Elders of the City that are next unto the slaine man shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley* (washing of the hands, was, first, an argument that blood defileth; secondly, it was a ceremony which implyed innocence and cleerenesse from blood, as appeares by a like action of *Pilate* (*Matth.* 27.24.) But these Elders must not only use this speaking ceremony, to shew their innocency, but they must explicitly professe it (*ver.* 7.) *And they shall answer and say, our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seene it*, And then the Priest must pray (*ver.* 8, 9.) *Be mercifull O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israels charg, and the blood shall be forgiven, so shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt doe that which is right in the sight of the Lord.* This solemn Law and the manner of proceeding upon it, shewes three things, as to the poynt in hand. First, that the Lord is very tender of shedding mans bloud; Secondly, that the shedding of mans blood in any murtherous way is extreamly displeasing to him. Thirdly, That God will certainly bring vengeance one time or other first or last, upon the murtherer, seeing a whole City should be charged, in some degree, with the blood of a man slaine neere them, if they did not publickly and solemnly declare and testifie their clearenesse from it.

But besides these two general Confiderations taken from Scripture, and now instanced in; There are may other grounded both upon Scripture authority and common reason, which set forth the vilenesse of this sin of murther.

First, Murther offereth violence to nature in common, there being but one common nature in all men. And hence

Secondly,

Secondly, He that murthers another offers violence to himselfe; for though there be a speciall sin of selfe-murther, yet the murther of another is selfe murther too, and that not only as it is an offering of violence to common nature, but also as it layes the murtherers own person open and obnoxious unto violence, and that, both to the violence of a private revenge, and to the violence of publicke Justice.

Thirdly, Murther destroyes society, men will never live together where they finde themselves continually in danger of their lives: Man is a sociable creature by nature, how sinful then is murther, which breaks the very first fundamental lawes of Nature?

Fourthly, Murther doth not onely defile the person that commits it, but the land also in which it is committed. (*Numb.* 35.31. 33.) *Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murtherer, which is guilty of death, and he shall surely be put to death; so ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are; for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.* Murther as acted defileth the person only that acts it, but murther (when known) defileth a whole land, if it goe unpunished. In which case there may be defilement upon a land by many other sins, but this is especially expresst of murther, as if that among and above all sins were the *land-defiling sin.*

Fifthly, Murther is not onely an injury to man, but an impiety against God and that's the reason given in the first Law which God made against it, (*Gen.* 9.6) *Who so sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the Image of God made he man.* For though the body of a man slain be not in the Image of God, yet the person slaine is, even the person of a wicked man hath somewhat of the Image of God remaining in him. And therefore that law is to be expounded universally; whosoever the man is, whether good or bad, righteous or wicked, whose blood is unrighteously shed *by man* (that is, *by man* who hath a call to it as being a Magistrate) *shall his blood be shed*, that is, he by his authority shall (upon proof) condemn him to dye, and shall give him up to execution. A contempt of the Image of God in man, is a contempt of God. And he takes it as a high affront to his Majesty, that any should presume to deface or spoyl his Image, And this doth more aggravate their sin, who oppose, vex, and destroy

godly men, because they oppose that more excellent Image of God, the new Creature, or the Image of God renewed in righteousnesse and true holinesse. As there is an image or likenesse of God in every man, so much more in a godly man, for Godlinesse is true God likenesse. Therefore to shed the blood of a Godly man is a higher affront to the Majesty of God. *As the new wine is in the cluster, and one saith destroy it not for a blessing is in it* (Isa. 65. 8.) So we may say, destroy not a Godly man, for a blessing is in him, (first, from God, and, secondly, for men) but we may say much more, *Destroy him not* for the Image of God is in him.

Sixthly, Murther deprives us of that which is most precious in the whole compasse of nature; And according to the value of that wherein the damage is received, is the greatnesse of the sin committed. Satan represented life better then all other things (*Job* 2. 4.) *Skin for skin and all that a man hath will he give for his life*; Gold and Silver, houses and lands are but toyes and trifles to life. There is nothing of man except his soule (which cannot dye) better then his life. And this the murtherer takes away. A murtherer is the greatest theife, and the vainest one, he steales away that from another which is to him of highest value, yet that which himselfe cannot carry away, nor make any use of.

Seventhly, The sinfulnesse of murther appeares in this; That it is not only a wrong to that particular person who is murdered, but a wrong to all that have dependance upon him. The life of one man may have an Influence upon many, wife and children, the whole family, and kindred, all relations, and employments; whether more private, or publicke, are wronged and suffer in his death. Though that which cuts off a mans life cannot cut off his owne hope (if he have a wel grounded one) for things to come, yet it cuts off the hopes of all others depending upon him (as an instrument in the hand of God) for good things present.

Eightly, The murther takes away that from a man which no man can restore to him, or repaire him in; he takes away that which is Impossible for him to give againe. He that took away a mans goods was bound by the law of God to restore it fourfold, or fivefold, or seven fold, (according to the case) and possibly he might restore it an hundred fold, but he that takes away a mans life, hath taken that (which though he would) he cannot restore so much as single. The law of nature will not suffer the murderer

er to restore life, for 'tis like water which being spilt cannot (by any humane power) be gathered up againe and the Law of God saith concerning the sin of murther, that no satisfaction shall be taken for it, and indeed none can. For though some would commute & have (by the sinful indulgence & cruel pity of unjust Magistrates) commuted for it, yet none could ever satisfie for it. And when Magistrates either through foul corruption, or foolish compassion, have not taken vengeance upon the murtherer in kinde, but have suffered him to commute or compound for that sin, either by paying a pecuniary penalty, or by undergoing some punishment lesse then death, God hath taken vengeance upon them for it, and hath said to them in his providences as he said to *Ahab* by his Prophet for the sparing of *Benhadad* (1 *Kings* 20. 42.) *Because ye have let goe out of your hand a man whom I had appointed to utter destruction, therefore your life shall go for his life, and your people shall be cut off by the sword, because your sword did not cut off the murtherer.* Whole Nations have been filled with blood by this kind of keeping back the hand from blood.

Lastly, The murtherer hurts others, but he chiefely hurts himselfe. Some expound *Lamech* confessing this with sorrow (*Gen.* 4. 23) while he said unto his wives, *Hearken unto my speech, for I have slaine a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.* There are divers other Interpretations and readings of those words, and we put in the Margin, *I would slay a man in my wound, and a young man in my hurt*, As if he had boasted of his strength to his wives, that though he were weak with wounds and hurts, yet he would venture to fight with any man, and doubted not to get victory over him & kill him: & so the words cary a sence like that speech of the Prophet (*Jer.* 37. 10.) telling the *Jewes* that theirs were vaine confidences while they hoped to be delivered from the *Chaldeans* who besieged them, *for*, saith he, *Though there remained but wounded men among them, yet they should rise up every man in his tent, and burne this City with fire.* But as to our reading, *I have slaine a man to my wounding.* Some expound it onely of a bodily wounding I have got a wound my self, or I have hurt my selfe while I slew a man much more is this true of a spirituall wounding, and hurt to the soule and Conscience: for though a murtherer slay a man, and come off with a whole skin, yet he slayeth a man to his wounding, and killeth him to his hurt The

Si magistratus cessent ab officio deus ipse injustas cædes fame peste & bellis externis aut intestinis ulcisci tur. Merl:

 Rab-

Rabbins, have a tradition upon that place; that *Lamech* having been a great hunter in his younger dayes, being then grown old was led forth by his young man to take his pleaſure in hunting, and ſhooting at Deere, and that while he was in this diſport or exerciſe in the field, *Cain* paſſed by, and the young man poynted him to *Cain*, *Lamech* (being dim ſighted) ſhot at *Cain* and killed him in ſtead of a wild beaſt; but ſoone after diſcovering that he had killed *Cain*, turned to the young man his guide in a paſſionate anger and killed him alſo. This relation they give as the reaſon why *Lamech* ſaid, *I have ſlaine a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt*: but I ſhall not ſtay upon that tradition of the *Jewes*; and ſhall only make ſo much uſe of *Lamechs* confeſſion, as at leaſt to illuſtrate, if not to prove, the poynt in hand, that he who ſlayeth a man doth it to his own hurt and wounding, often to the wounding of his body, eſtate, and honour, alwayes to the wounding of his own ſoul and conſcience. Every ſin in ſome degree or other wounds the ſoul; But the wounding of others to death is the chief ſin (of all ſins againſt the body and outward concernments of man) which woundeth a mans ſoul The murtherer at one blow ſtrikes through the body of his neighbour and his own ſoule.

Further, we might obſerve from thoſe words in the text, *riſing with the light*:

That murderers, and indeed any ſort of wicked doers, are diligent and laborious to doe the commands of their vileſt luſts.

But I noted this at the 5th verſe upon thoſe words, *Riſing betimes for a prey*, I ſhall not ſtay upon it here, I onely adde this; Let us not be ſloathfull in doing good, ſeeing the murtherer is ſo diligent and early up for the doing of miſchiefe.

And in the night is as a Theife.

Theſe words may be taken two wayes; For

Particula quaſi non dicit ſimilitudinem ſed proprietatem.

Firſt, The Particle, *as*, is by ſome conceived not to be a note of ſimilitude, but to carry on a direct predication, *He is as a theif*, that is, *He is a very theif*. We find elſewhere in Scripture, that a particle of likeneſs doth not only note the likeneſs of one thing to another, but the ſameneſſe of one thing with another. Taking it thus here; The meaning of the words is as if *Job* had ſaid, *He riſeth betimes in the morning to play the murtherer, and in the night he playe's the thiefe.* I have noted the ſame ſence of the particle heretofore, firſt, from thoſe words of the Evangeliſt concerning Chriſt (*John* 1. 14.) *We ſaw his glory as the glory of the onely begotten Son of God*; for Chriſt was not onely like the only begotten Son of God, but he was really ſo: as alſo from that of the Prophet (*Hoſea* 5. 10.) *The Princes of Judah were as or like them that remove the bound*, that is, they did remove the bound.

Secondly, Others keep to the ſimilitude, and ſay the meaning of *Job* is not, that the murtherer doth turne theif, or that he proceeds from killing in the day to ſtealing in the night; But ſay they, this verſe is quite through a deſcription of the murtherer, as the next is of the Adulterer: So that to ſay, *In the night he is as a Theife*, imports onely this; That in the night he doth carry himſelfe very cloſely and very ſecretly, or that as a theife in the night is cloſe and ſudden in ſtealing, ſo is he the murtherer in killing. We have this ſimilitude often uſed (1 *Theſ.* 5. 2.) *The Coming of Chriſt ſhall be as a Theif in the night*. Read alſo (2 *Pet.* 3. 10. *Revel:* 16. 15.) in which the ſame ſimilitude of a Theife in the night is applyed to Chriſts coming, not as if we could hence conclude, that Chriſt will come in the night time, but that, whenſoever he comes it ſhall be as in the night, that is, ſuddenly, and (as to any antecedent appearances) ſecretly upon the world, it ſhall be unexpected to them, they ſhall not know the time of it, nor ſhall they be a ware of it, though when he is once come, his coming ſhall be accompanyed with ſo much light and luſter, with ſo much ſplendor and power as ſhall not onely awaken, but aſtoniſh all the world. Thus it may be ſaid of the murtherer, *In the night he is as a Theif*. And

Facere aliquid tanquam fur eſt proverbialis locutio, quæ innuit portas ſecretam diligentem & abſconſionem.

Hence, it may be noted.

Firſt, *That wicked men give themſelves wholly to watch opportunities of doing miſchiefe.*

The murtherer riſeth early in the morning, and in the night is as a Theife: he takes his advantages in the day, and he will not forbeare them in the night. As it ſhewes the great aſſiduity of Saints in prayer when it is ſaid, *They cry to God day and night* (Luke 18. 7.) day and night reach the whole compaſſe of time. So while *Job* tells us that the wicked are doing miſchief betimes in the morning, and that they are at it againe in

in the night, if not all the night, What can be said more for their watchfulnesse and assiduity in doing mischief? The Apostle (*Eph.* 5. 16.) exhorteth Saints *to redeeme the time because the dayes are evill*; but we see in the present example, alledged by *Job*, that wicked men will redeeme the time, that they may doe evill. We cannot possibly redeeme the time, by recalling or bringing back the time which is past, but we may redeem the time by our more diligent *actings in the time present*; Now, who can act more diligently in improving the time present, then they who are at work both day and night, which two distinctions of time include and carry all time, Let not the Godly be found Idling away the day, while the wicked are found labouring (at their work, such as it is) in the very night.

Againe, We may note.

That the murtherer doth his bloody businesse not only diligently, but closely.

He doth it as a theife in the night. The murtherer, who is at all times feirce and cruel, will sometimes be subtle and cunning; and this is the guise of other sinners too, especially of the Adulterer, whose secret conveyances and close contrivances for the attaining of his filthy delights, are elegantly described in the words which follow.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 24. Vers. 15, 16, 17.

The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twi light, saying, no eye shall see me: and disguiseth his face.
In the dark they dig through houses which they have marked for themselves in the day time: they know not the light.
For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death; if one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death.

WE have heard many wickednesses described in the former part of this Chapter, and in the foregoing verse, *The murtherer rising with the light killeth the poore and needy, and in the night is as a Theife.* *Job* proceeds to discover the practices of two other sorts of grosse sinners, the Adulterer and the Theif.

Vers. 15. *The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twi light.*

Before I come to open the particular terms of this clause, or to raise any observations from it, I shall give in somewhat about Adultery in generall, which is the speciall subject of the whole verse. Adultery is the breach of the 7th Commandement. And in that Commandement a twofold Adultery is forbidden, First, Mentall, or the adultery of the minde, secondly Corporal, or the adultery of the body. It was the former which Christ intended, when he corrected the false glosse or exposition of the Pharisees about the 7th Commandement, (*Matth.* 5 27, 28.) *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* By which it appeares, that the Pharisees, who were the chief interpreters of the Law in those times, limited the commandement against Adultery to the outward act but Christ the Lawgiver who best knew the mind of the Law, enlarged it to the prohibition of the internal act, & told them that there is a heart adultery, an adultery in thought, occasion'd by a vain or wanton

glance'

glance and caſt of the eye, as there's an Adultery of the body or in the outward act.

Latina vocat adulteri & adulteræ hanc vim habent ut adulter ad alteram, adultera ad Alterum ſe conferat. Feſt.

The text in hand ſpeaks only of corporal Adultery, though the other be not excluded as being the roote of it. And this corporall adultery is taken in Scripture ſometimes ſtrictly, when either man or woman to ſatisfie their luſt with others break their conjugal Bond; and is either that act of uncleaneſſe which is committed by perſons who are both engaged by marriage-covenant to mutuall faithfulneſs, or when at leaſt one of them is under that engagement. This latter is properly called ſingle adultery; the former is double Adultery, or corporal Adultery in the higheſt and ſtricteſt ſence of it. Secondly, Corporeal Adultery is taken more largely, or in a lower ſence for fornication or bodily uncleaneneſſe of any kind between man and woman. And ſo it is intended in the Commandement given againſt it; *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery.*

The foulneſſe and greatneſſe of this ſin of adultery (take it in either ſence) appeares many wayes. The Apoſtle puts it in the front of the workes of the fleſh (*Gal.* 5. 19.) *Now the workes of the fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe, Adultery, fornication, uncleanneſſe, laſciviouſneſſe*, there is adultery with all its retinue; and (*Col.* 3. 5.) it is ſet as the firſt of our earthly members, which are to be mortified; *mortifie therefore your members which are upon earth, fornication, uncleaneneſſe, inordinate affection.* Whereas in other Scriptures fornication is included under adultery, in this adultery is included under fornication.

Adultery ſtrictly taken, hath a ſpeciall ſinfulneſſe in it. Firſt, as it is the breach of a Covenant; every ſin hath in it a breach of Covenant in generall, but there is a ſuperadded breach of a ſpeciall Covenant in this ſin. Hence *Solomon* ſaith of the Adultereſſe (*Prov.* 2. 17.) that ſhe *forſaketh the guide of her youth.* One of the Rabbins expounds this woman myſtically for the ſenſitive appetite, and that ſhe is ſaid to *forſake the guide of her youth*, becauſe in youth appetite commonly forſakes reaſon, which is appointed to be the guide of it. But we may expound this guide either for her father, who had the government of her in her younger years, or elſe for her husband whom ſhe married in her youth, and whom by marriage ſhe received as the guide of her youth, under God, who is indeed the guid both of our youth and old age:

and

and what guide ſoever the wife forſaketh, ſhe cheifly forſaketh God who is her chief guide *and forgetteth the covenant of her God*, that is, the covenant which God gave her in reference to that particular eſtate of marriage. Every believer is in covenant with God, in reference to his ſpirituall eſtate, but a married perſon hath a covenant with God in reference to that civill ſtate; And Adultery is the breach of this covenant.

Secondly, This ſhewes the ſinfullneſſe of Adultery, that it is a ſin which cannot be committed alone, there is alwayes a double ſin, in this ſin of adultery, two are defiled with it at once. In which ſence it is worſe then murther, and theft; For theſe may be committed, and but one defiled with the ſinfullneſſe of them. He that robs is guilty of ſtealing, not he that is robbed; He that murders is guilty of blood, not he that is murdered; But in Adultery, the Agent and patient are both alike guilty of uncleaneneſſe; The defilement reacheth both.

Thirdly, The evill of this ſin appeares, by the many and manifold evills which it brings with it. *Solomon* hath ſet them forth very particularly and fully (*Pro.* 6. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30) *Luſt not after her* (that is, after the ſtrange woman) *in thine heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids*, (why not? Firſt, thou mayeſt be undone in thy outward ſtate.) *by means of a whoriſh woman a man is brought to a piece of bread*, (that is, he is ruin'd in all he hath by it, and brought to ſo low an ebbe of poverty, that he hath ſcarce the worth of a piece of bread left) *And* (which is both a ſecond and a worſe evill) *the adultereſſe will hunt for the precious life*, which may either be underſtood of the naturall life, (ſometimes the adulterer is murther'd by the adultereſſe) or of that which is a more precious life then the natural even the life of the ſoule, or the eternall good and happineſſe of the ſoul, ſhe cares not to deſtroy body, and ſoule for ever (ſo her luſt may be ſatisfied) that's the gaine which the adultereſſe purſues; *ſhe hunts for the precious life*, the life of the ſoule. Thirdly, *Solomon* deſcribes the evill of this ſin in the 27 and 28 verſes, by the guilt which it inevitably brings with it; *Can a man take fire in his boſome, and his cloaths not be burnt? can a man goe upon hot coals and his feete not be burnt? So he that goeth into his neighbours wife, whoſoever toucheth her ſhall not be innocent*, that is, he ſhall ſurely be very guilty. As if he had ſaid, You can no more retaine your innocen-

cy, while you commit this folly, then you can avoyd being burnt when you carry fire in your bosome, or tread upon burning coals. Fourthly, the sinfullnesse of this sin appeares, by the comparison which the Scripture makes between it and theft, (*Pro.* 6.30,31.) *Men doe not despise a theif, if he steal to satisfie his soule when he is hungry*; it is a sin to steale, though it be to satisfie hunger; no necessity can excuse iniquity; and we should rather chuse to starve then steal, if at lest that may be called stealing, which is done meerly to avoyd starving. Therefore (saith *Solomon*) *if he be found, he shall restore seavenfold, he shall give all the substance of his house*; yet this sin of stealing which is to satisfie hunger is but a small sin compared with Adultery, which is only to satisfie a mans lust and beastiall sensualnes. This *Solomon* affirmes to us in the next words; *But who so committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding, he that doth it destroyeth his own soul.* He that stealeth, upon those tearms doth it for want, but he that commits adultery upon any tearmes doth it for wantonnesse. He that stealeth doth it for lack of bread, but he that committeth adultery doth it for lack of understanding. He that stealeth when he is hungry doth it to satisfie his soul, but he that committeth adultery (though he doth it not with an intent to destroy his soule, yet in the issue he) destroyeth his own soule. But is not stealing a soule destroying sin too? I answer, it is; and so is every sin in its own nature, but there are some sins (and among these adultery is a chiefe one) which in the event prove usually more destructive to the soule, and have oftener destroyed it. And as this sin doth very often destroy the soul as to its happinesse hereafter; so it destroyeth it as to its abiding here. Thus the soule may be said to be destroyed when the life is destroyed; and this destruction of the soule *Solomon* seems directly to ayme at, as the next words lead us to Judge (*ver.* 33.) *A wound and dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away, for jealousie is the rage of a man, therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.*

Ferenda est magis omni necessitas quam perpetranda aliqua iniquitas.

Another Scripture to be much minded in this poynt is that of St *Paul* (1 Cor.6.13,14.) where writing to the Church of *Corinth* (among which people that sin was very common before they were called to the knowledge of Christ by the preaching of the Gospel) he urgeth many arguments upon their consciences, to prevent their relapse into it. And we may discover six arguments

ments which the Apostle useth in that place; I shall only touch them, and so returne to the text in hand. The first appeares at the close of the 13th verse, *Now the body is not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body*; As if he had said, you put the body to a use for which it was never intended, *the body is not for fornication*, but, *for the Lord*, that is, for the Lords use and service; and the Lord is for the body, that is, for the good and salvation of the body. Such is the wonderfull goodnesse of God, that look in whatsoever we are for him, he is for us; As our bodyes are for the Lords service as well as our soules, so the Lord is for the good of our bodyes, as well as for the good of our soules. And therefore our bodyes ought to be imployed for his Glory in every thing. The second argument is taken from the resurrection; *God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power* (ver. 14.) As if he had said, your bodyes shall be raised againe; if they were to be lost in the dust, then it were no great matter how you did defile, and abuse them, but as God hath raised up the Lord, so he will raise you up. Seeing then God hath promised, and you are such as professe faith in that promise, that your bodyes shall be raised up out of the dust, to put on glory as a Garment in the last day, therefore in the meane time (while your bodyes are in your keeping) doe ye keepe your bodies pure. Thirdly, He argues thus with the believing *Corinthians*, (*v.* 15.) *Know ye not that your bodyes are the members of Christ*; not only is the soul of a believer the member of Christ, but his body too, yet it is not properly either the body or the soul that is a member of Christ, but the person; for the union is made between Christ and the person of a beleever, consisting of soule and body. But thus the Apostle argues, *Know ye not that your bodyes are the members of Christ, shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of an harlot, God forbid.* What! will ye dispose the members of Christ to so base a use? will ye who professe your selves joyned to Christ, condiscend to such a base conjunction? And hence he expostulates at the 16th and 17th verses, *What? know ye not that he which is joyned to an harlot is one body, for two, saith he, shall be one flesh,* (They who abuse marriage, are as the marryed, The Adulterer and the harlot are one flesh as well as the husband and the wife) *but he that is joyned to the Lord* (by faith and love) *is one spirit*: He hath a neerer and a more noble

union then that of flesh, and therefore he ought to maintaine the hight of honour and purity, both in mind and body; and as he is one Spirit with the Lord, so to make it good that he is guided and governed by one Spirit, and that *The holy One*. We have a fourth argument at the 18 h verse, *Flee fornication*, why so? The reason is added, *every sin that a man doth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body*. But are all other sins without the body? I answer; first, other sinnes have the body as an instrument for the committing of them; if a man steale, the body is an instrument, if a man commit murther, the body is an instrument, but in this sin the body is more instrumentall then in other sins, the body is chiefly instrumentall, in this sin; so that comparatively to this, *every sin that a man doth is without the body*. And therefore this sin is more against the body then other sins are. Againe, secondly, when the Apostle saith, *every sin is without the body*, he is to be understood of those sinnes which are external, otherwise every sin that a man commits is not without the body, there are a thousand acts of sin that are done within the body, or in the soul, envy, wrath, malice, are sinnes within the body, being bred and acted in the Spirit. But we may say of every sin which is externall, (about which the discourse there is) that comparatively to this sin of adultery, & fornication, it is without the body. I answer, thirdly, The body is not only the instrument of this sin, but the object of it also; for the uncleane person doth not only sin with his body, but he sins against his body; Adultery leaves that blot and brand of ignominy and basenesse upon the body, which no other sin doth, making it the member of a harlot, as was toucht before, and degrading it from that excellent honour whereunto God advanced it, even in a naturall consideration, much more degrading it from that honour, whereunto God hath advanced it in a spirituall consideration. And as that was the Apostles third argument, so, upon another relation of the bodies of beleevers, he makes his 5th argument, which is layd down at the 19 h verse; *What? know you not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own*; As if he had said, *A Temple is a holy and sacred thing, and will ye defile the Temple of the Holy Ghost?* The *Jewes*, how angry were they? what an uproar did they make, when they thought *Paul* had brought Greeks into the Temple, who by the law were looked upon as prophane persons, and so not to be admitted to come there; they cry out, *This is the man that hath polluted this holy place* (Acts 21.28) Much more may it be urged upon Gospel-professors, what! commit such a sin as this? what! pollute the Temple of God? *Know ye not* (which every beleever is bound to know) *that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost as well as the soule*. The last argument concludes the 19th verse and is prosecuted in the 20th; *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit which are Gods*. Redemption is a strong engagement, *ye are bought*, and dearly paid for, *ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own*. Some (who take liberty in this sin) would excuse themselves by the contrary argument. *Our bodyes* (say they) *are our own, and we may doe what we will with our owne*. No, saith the Apostle, *ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own*; ye have your bodyes of God, in their naturall constitution, *It is he who hath made us* (in that capacity) *and not we our selves* (Psal. 100. 3) *and ye are not your own*; for ye are redeemed or bought with a price, both body and soule. Ye are bought out of your own hands, as well as out of the hand of divine justice and displeasure. The Apostle speaks especially to believers. For though it be a truth concerning all, whether believers, or unbeleevers, that *they are not their own*, none of the sons of men are their own, God hath a right to them by creation, as also by his continuall providence, provision, and preservation, yet believers or the redeemed in a speciall manner, *are not their own*, and therefore they ought above others to *glorifie God in their body and in their spirit which are Gods*. Having thus opened severall Scripture grounds and arguments to demonstrate the foulenesse and filthinesse of this sin of Adultery, which is the general subject of this verse; I shall now proceed in the exposition of particulars in it.

The eye also of the Adulterer waiteth &c.

The word, *also*, referres to the murderer spoken of in the former verse; implying, that the Adulterer and he, though their sins are very different, yet agree much in taking their oppertunities of sinning. How contrary soever sinners are in their particular practice, yet they have all one common principle and Spirit. The Murder-

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er and the Adulterer are alike deſierous of privacy. They both love darkneſſe rather then light, or that which is neither, *Twilight*. *Job* ſeemes to ſpeake of a man, that is no novice, but of one long verſt and practiced in this way of wickedneſſe. *The eye alſo of the adulterer waiteth*, that is, *the adulterer himſelfe waiteth*. *Job* doth not ſay, the *Adulterer waiteth*, but *the eye of the Adulterer waiteth*, becauſe the eye is much in adultery; The eye hath ſo great a ſhare in that ſin, that the whole ſin is here charged upon the eye. The Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Pet.* 2. 14) ſpeakes of a generation of evill men, *having their eyes full of adultery*, or (as the Greek Originall hath it with much Emphaſis) *full of an Adulteresſe*. As if he had ſaid; they are perſons ſo given up to uncleaneſſe, that they have no deſire to ſee any body with their eyes but an Adulteresſe, nor is any thing elſe to be ſeen in their eyes but Adultery. They are as impudent as they are uncleane, letting out the Adultery which is in their hearts at their eyes, not caring who ſees it. Adultery is ſeated in the heart, there's the fountaine of it (*Math.* 15. 19.) *Out of the heart proceed evill thoughts, murthers, adulteries, fornications, theſts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemy*; Adultery comes out of the heart, but 'tis firſt ſeene in the eye, yea the eye often gives the firſt occaſion of it to the heart, (*Math.* 5. 28.) *Whoſoever looketh upon a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*. Wanton love uſually aſcends by theſe five ſteps: Firſt, the eye ſees; ſecondly, the heart deſires; thirdly, the thoughts are plotting and contriving how to attain what is deſired; fourthly, there is hope to attaine what is plotted; and, fifthly, there is joy and delight in the attainment of what was hoped. Thus uſually the eye gives the occaſion and leads the dance in all the meetings of vanity. The ancient Moraliſt (in his booke *of the long coming revenges of God*) makes report that one *Apollidorus* being in a dream ſaw his own skin pull'd off by a barbarous Scythian, who then preſently threw him into a chaldron of boiling water, where being tormented his heart whiſpered to him, *I am the cauſe of all this*. The heart is the cauſe of puniſhment and miſery, remotely, becauſe nextly it is the cauſe of ſin, eſpecially of this ſin of adultery; yet as the heart doth ſometimes ſet the eye on work to find out objects, ſo the eye meeting with objects ſets the heart aworke, yea it ſets the heart a fire, or all in a flame with vaine deſires and adulterous luſtings. The eyes of

Oculus Adulteri, i. e. ipſe Adulter.

In re amatoria occulti ſunt lenones, prima amoris via. Lucian *Amoris principium* Plato. *Amoris ſedes,* Philoſtr. *Nihil in oculis eſt quod non ſit laſcivum & petulans, nihil in oculorum pupilla in eſſe dicas, quam amicam, cum potiri non poſſint, ſaltem conſpectu ſe ſaciant.*

Plutarchus de ſera numinis vindicta

of ſome look out continually for the fuel of thoſe ſecret fires, and the eyes of others meet with it unlooked for. A good mans eye may meet with a vaine object, but his eye doth not goe out to ſeek or wait for it. Againſt ſuch active wickedneſſe *Job* profeſſed while he ſaid (*Chap* 31. 1.) *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes*, &c. A godly mans eye hath ſomewhat elſe to waite upon, then ſuch enſnaring objects. And the Pſalmiſt tells us upon what the Godly mans eye waits (*Pſal.* 123. 2.) *Behold as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hand of their Maſters*, &c. *ſo our eyes waite upon the Lord our God untill he have mercy upon us*. The eye of a Godly man waiteth to receive Good, and the eye of a wicked man waiteth to doe evill. The Adulterer hath *a waiting eye*, and this waiting notes three things.

Firſt, That the Adulterer is very diligent, and intentive to attaine his purpoſe; he that waites is more then awake; He is not onely awake but watchfull; both theſe are put together (*Pro.* 8. 34.) where the diligence of the Saints is ſpoken of in their waiting upon Chriſt in his appointments; *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching dayly at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors*; they who waite at the poſts of wiſdome, that is, of Chriſt, *watch alſo at his gates*; they watch there, and they waite there. It is poſſible for a man to watch, as watching is only oppoſed to ſleeping, and yet not to waite, that is, not to be diligent or attentive upon any buſineſs, but he that watcheth, as watching is oppoſed to Idling, he is alwayes waiting as long as watching, and he cannot but be watching, who is indeed waiting. Thus the Adulterer takes much pains to obtaine his forbidden pleaſures, his eye waiteth and watcheth, he is a diligent ſervant or ſlave rather to his luſt; every man that commits ſin, is a ſervant to ſin, and every ſervant muſt waite, it is the duty of a ſervant to waite for his Lord, the adulterer waites upon his luſt as upon his Lord, every luſt would be waited upon as a Lord. Saints watch at wiſdomes gates, and waite like ſervants at her poſts to know her pleaſure. Adulterers watch at whoredomes gates, and at her poſts they wait for ſinfull pleaſures.

Secondly, To waite, implyeth the exerciſe of much patience: he that waiteth, expects long, he muſt expect and ſtay till the opportunity comes, *Even the wicked have patience upon hopes of injoyment*; And ſhall not the Godly? It may ſhame the Godly out of

of their impatience and loathnes to wait for an anſwer of prayer from God, when they hear that *The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, untill he receave the early and the latter rain* (Jam. 5 7.) But it may ſhame them much more out of all their impatience in waiting for good things from God, when they hear that the Adulterer waiteth for the whoriſh woman, and hath long patience, till he receive his longing.

Thirdly, Waiteing implyeth the Adulterers fixednesſe in and reſolvednesſe to ſinne, *his eye waiteth*; he doth not ſin by a ſudden glance of his eye, or upon a vehement guſt of temptation, or upon an unthought of hurry of wanton paſſions, but he ſins deliberately, and (as it were) in coole blood. He waiteth for and watcheth his ſeaſon, he is ſerious and ſtudious about his wickednesſe.

Hence note.

A wicked man ſins with reſolution.

He that waiteth to doe any thing, hath a reſolution to doe it. A Godly man ſins, but he doth not waite to ſin; or if at any time he do ſo, he at that time acts the wicked mans part in the godly mans ſtate, and ſo upon a ſtrong temptation Godly men have done. But uſually he is a wicked man (as to his ſtate) that waites for a temptation. Afflictions waite every where for a godly man (as *Paul* ſpake of himſelfe, *Acts* 20.23.) and ſo alſo doe Temptations. But the ungodly are every where waiting for temptations. They are not ſurpriſed, or taken unawares, by a ſin, but they are reſolved to take their firſt opportunity of ſinning. What a godly man ſaith (when he is in a right frame) in reference to the wayes of holineſſe (*Pſal.* 108. 1.) *O God my heart is prepared or fixed*; A godly man doth not good upon a ſudden, or by chance (as we ſay) but he ſets himſelfe to it, his heart is fixed or prepared, and his face is ſet heaven-ward, or for heavenly duties. So *Daniel* ſpake of himſelfe (*Dan.* 9. 3.) *I ſet my face unto the Lord God to ſeeke by prayer and ſupplications*, and as a godly man is in the wayes of God, ſo the wayes of God are in him. Thus *David* deſcribes him (*Pſal.* 84. 5.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſtrength is in thee, in whoſe heart are the wayes of them*, that is, the wayes which Godly men walke in, and they are the wayes of God. Now as this is the true ſtate of godlineſſe when the heart is in it and prepared for it, ſo the true ſtate of wickednesſe is, when a mans heart is in it and prepared for it. This is the proper character of a wicked man. *The eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twilight.*

Every word hath weight in it, *the twilight* is the Adulterers ſeaſon; It is not ſayd, he waites for the night, or for the day, but he waiteth for the *twilight*, which is neither day nor night, but between both. We have ſuch a deſcription of time in reference to the mixt and uncertaine ſtate of things (*Zach.* 14. 6, 7.) *And it ſhall come to paſſe in that day, that the light ſhall not be cleare nor darke; But it ſhall be one day which ſhall be known to the Lord, not day nor night.* Such a thing is Twilight, it is neither cleare nor darke, neyther day nor night, but between both. There is a twofold twilight; firſt, the morning twilight; and, ſecondly, the evening twilight; the morning twilight begins when the night ends, the evening twilight begins when the day ends. The Latines have two diſtinct words to expreſſe theſe diſtinct twilights by, but our language is not ſo well ſtored, and therefore we muſt diſtinguiſh them by the matter ſpoken of, or the ſcope of the ſpeaker. Thus here, when 'tis ſaid in the text, he *waiteth for the twilight*, we are to underſtand it of the evening twilight, not for the morning twilight, and the reaſon is, becauſe the morning twilight is not for the adulterers turn or purpoſe, for then the light prevails upon the darkneſſe, but it is the evening twilight, for then darkneſſe prevails upon the light. And that this is the Adulterers twilight is cleare (*Prov.* 7. *v.* 6, 7, 8, 9.) *At the window of my houſe* (ſaith *Solomon*) *I looked through the caſement, and behold among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths a man voyd of underſtanding paſſing by the way to her houſe, and he went neer her corner, in the twilight in the evening* (or) *in the evening of the day, in the black and darke night. And behold there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot*, &c. His eye waited for the twilight, and in the twilight he was taken.

Diluculum.

Crepuſculū.

Nox et tenebræ adminiſtræ ſunt impijs ſuarum libidinum. Ipſa nox alioquin caca inſandarum tamen libidinū oculatus teſtis eſt.

Hence note.

The doing of evill hath its proper ſeaſons, as well as the doing of good.

Though ſin be never in ſeaſon, yet it hath ſometimes which are

more seasonable for it; to sin is never in season, as to the lawfulnesse of committing it, but sin hath its seasons as to the conveniency of committing it. The Adulterer takes his season, *he waiteth for the twilight.* Whence note secondly.

Evill men are very carefull to hit their seasons for the doing of evill.

It were desireable that the godly were as carefull to hit their seasons and take their times, as the ungodly are. *To every thing* (saith the Preacher,) *Eccl.* 3. 1.) *there is a season and a time for every purpose under the Sunne.* And because it is so (saith the same Preacher, *Eccl.* 8. 6.) *The misery of man is great upon him.* But why doth this make the misery of man great upon him? I answer, The reason of this misery upon man, is not because there is a season, but because either of his ignorance or negligence to find it. There are a thousand wayes to misse a season, and but one to hit it; and were there as many wayes to hit as to misse, it were a thousand to one but man would misse rather then hit, and therefore the misery of man is great upon him, because if once he misse his season, it cannot be recovered, and then he must needs be miserable. Good men are miserable (as to some cases) because they are often so careless to hit their season of doing good, and do so often misse it, notwithstanding all their care. Wicked men are for ever miserable, because they are so carefull not to misse their season of doing evill, and doe so often hit it. The eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twilight, and he seldome (as to his own end) waites in vaine. But why is he so greedy for the twilight? The next words say why, where he brought in

Saying, no eye shall see me.

Where sayth he this? he sayth it in his heart, this is his discourse in his own breast; and to whom sayth he this? he saith it to himselfe, there is a dialogue between the Adulterer and his owne heart, and thus he concludes, *I will wait for the twilight, and then no eye shall see me.* And when he sayth, *no eye shall see me*, his meaning is, There is not any eye that shall see me. Thus he playes the foole at *All's hid.*

Yet further, this *no eye* may have a threefold reference,

First, No eye of common men shall see me, I will doe this in secret,

secret, I will have such a cover of darkenesse over me, that my neighbours and friends shall not be able to take any notice of me.

Secondly, No eye, may referre to men in chiefe, that is, no eye of the Magistrate, nor of any Minister of Justice shall see me. Magistrates are the eyes of a Nation, they should overlooke all places, either by themselves or their Officers, to observe what is done. As the Adulterers eye watcheth, so there should be an eye of Justice watching to catch Adulterers. Some interpret this Text, especially of the Adulterers hope, or self-perswasion that he shall escape the eye or knowledge of the Magistrate, who is appointed to oversee the manners of that people over whom he is placed, and to be a terror, yea a Minister of vengeance to them that doe evill; *for he beareth not the Sword in vaine* (Rom. 13. 3, 4.) Magistrates should so much marke and eye the state of a people, that they are called *eyes* in Scripture (*Isa.* 29. 10.) *For the Lord hath powred out upon you the Spirit of deepe sleepe, and hath closed your eyes* (what or who are those eyes? the next words enforme us) *the Prophets and Rulers, the seers hath he covered.* The Hebrew word which we render *rulers* is *heads*; Rulers are the heads of a people, and what is a head without eyes, or having its eyes covered. God did not cover the eyes which were in the peoples personal heads, but he covered the eyes which were in their publicke heads. *He hath closed your eyes*, that is, those that should be as heads and eyes to you, your Prophets and your rulers. Thus also say some Government is expressed by an eye (*Deut.* 33. 28.) *Israel then shall dwell in safety alone, the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corne and wine, also his heaven shall drop dew.* That which we translate *the fountaine of Jacob*, others render as well, and as truly from the Original, *the eye of Jacob*, that is (say they) *the Magistracy, the ruling power*, as if he had said, as the people of *Israel* in generall shall dwell in safety, so their eye, their government or their Governours in speciall shall be blessed with plenty, they shall be upon a land of corne and wine. It hath been observed also in antiquity, that great Princes had certaine men in office *whom they called their eyes.* Princes have their eyes and eares in every place, that is, their Officers. Thus we may expound this Text, the Adulterer sayth, *No eye shall see me.* The ruling or Magistraticall eye shall not see me, and if what I doe be not seene by

Verba quæ sequuntur exigunt ut ista de Magistratus justitiaq; ministris intelligantur. Bold:

Quisquis aut officio aut quovis alio modo super alios in spicit, abusq; eorum observat oculus vocatur oculus.

Fons vel oculus Jacob suum imperium habebit in terra Canaan. Bold:

Apud persarum reges quidam fuerunt qui dicebantur oculi & aures. Zenoph.

that eye (let others see what they will, and say what they please) I shall not suffer at all for what I doe; and then all's well, that's as much as I care for. And here we may note, That, As some Adulterers have their eyes abroad, that is, agents to espy out beauties for them. So most of them (if not all) are afraid of the eyes of others.

Thirdly, *No eye shall see me*, that is, not the eye of God; God himselfe shall not see me. Thus the Adulterer hopes to hide his sin from his eye who is indeed all eye, and whose eye is over all. Thus the Adulterer supposeth himselfe under such a vayl of darkenes, that he is free not only from the eye of men on earth, and from the eye of those who are gods upon earth, but even from the eye of the God of heaven.

Hominem latere captum Dei oculum non timens.

Hence observe.

First, *A sinner is full of vain presumption.*

He presumes that the sin which he commits against the light of his own conscience, shall never come to light; he presumes that the sin which he commits in his own eye, shall not come to the eye of others. I have elsewhere noted this ignorant confidence of carnall men, and onely name it here.

Secondly, Note.

It is not the act of sin, but the discovery of it which a wicked man feareth.

He cares not what wickednesse he doth, so he may goe unseen; a godly man is afraid of doing evill, though he could doe it with greatest secrecy, or under the darkest cover: he is afraid to doe evill, because of the evill and unrighteousnesse of it, because of the pollution, and unanswerablenesse of it, both to his own duty, and the goodnesse of God to him, but it is the discovery not the iniquity of his worke, which the hypocrite feareth.

Thirdly, As the eye is taken for the eye of the Magistrate.

Observe.

That it is the punishment of sin at which a wicked man is troubled, he is not troubled at the sin it selfe.

'Tis the consequence of sin, not the nature of it, the smart of sin, and not the filth of it, which the wicked would avoyd.

Lastly,

Lastly, As no eye is exclusive also to the eye of God.

Note.

Wicked men presume that their sins are secret even to God himselfe.

They thinke, sure, God can see no further, nor no better then man; And so they have hopes to hide themselves, not only from the eyes of men, but from the eyes of God, as we may see plainly (*Jere.* 23. 23.) *Can any hide himselfe in secret places, that I shall not see him, sayth the Lord*; This question, *can any?* shews that some had flattered themselves into such a conclusion, that they could so hide themselves in secret places, that God could not see them. The holy Psalmist sayd (*Psal.* 139. 12.) *The darknes hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day, the darkenesse and the light to thee are both alike*. But a wicked man sayth, the darkenesse hideth from thee, the night is night to thee. O what beggerly apprehensions have men of God! As if he whose eyes are ten thousand times brighter then the Sunne, could not see without Sunlight, or as if he could not see but in the light, who made the light. Naturalists say of those living creatures which have fiery eyes, that they can see as well in the darke as in the light, the reason is, because they see not by taking in the species of the object into the eye, but by sending out a light from their own eye upon the object. God hath fiery eyes indeed, he needs no outward light to see by who is nothing else but light. Vain sinner, what can be darkenesse to him, who is light, and in whom there is no darkenesse at all? There is nothing doth more argue the blindnesse of a sinner, then this simple saying of his, *No eye seeth me*, unlesse it be that simple practice of his which he useth to the same purpose, and which is discovered (as his last shift) in the last words of this verse.

Vanus est qui putat se in tenebris esse latentem cum lucem videre non possit, qui lucet in tenebris & tenebræ eam non comprehendunt. Ambros.

And he disguiseth his face.

The Hebrew is, *He setteth his face into a secret*; he muffles himselfe, he changeth his habit, he puts on a visard; harlots were wont to disguise themselves (*Gen.* 39. 14.) when *Tamar* tooke upon her the habit of an harlot, the Text saith, *She put on a disguise*; so here the Adulterer puts on a disguise, he puts a cozzening face upon his face, and then thinkes, that though he be seene, yet

yet he cannot be diſcerned, and that though ſome may ſee where he is, yet none ſhall ſee who he is, *He diſguiſeth his face.* One would have thought that being in the twilight, and the darkenes of the night ready to compaſſe him about, that no eye could ſee him, he ſhould not need to have put on a viſard or a muffler, yet he doth ſo, he puts a diſguiſe upon his face.

Which may teach us.

That when a man doth ill, he never thinkes he is ſafe, or ſecret enough.

When a mans conſcience tells him he ſins, he would not have any other tell him ſo too. The Adulterer feares twilight is too light for him, and therefore while the naturall darkeneſſe is ſo imperfect; he puts his face into perfect artificiall darkeneſſe. *Job* yet proceeds to ſhew this cowardly temper of ſinners in their fear to be ſeen, either by a further diſcovery of the ſame ſort of ſinners, or of another ſort, in the ſame frame.

Verſ. 16. *In the darke they dig through houſes which they have marked for themſelves in the day time, they know not the light.*

We have all along the words, and the workes of darkeneſſe; *In the darke, they dig through houſes.* The queſtion is, who are here meant by theſe diggers; ſome underſtand the verſe of the adulterer; And whereas he ſpeakes here in the plurall number, and before in the ſingular; 'tis frequent in Scripture (ſay they) to vary the number while the ſame ſubject is continued. And that while he ſaith, *They*, the meaning is *One and all* of them are bent and apt enough to doe thus. But is digging through houſes the work of an Adulterer? In anſwer to this, it hath been ſtoryed and remembred, that Adulterers have uſed ſuch boyſterous practices to come at their unlawfull pleaſures; they have digged through houſes to make private paſſages that they might not be diſcovered when they came to, or when they departed from their lovers. It hath been commonly ſayd that hunger will breake through ſtone walls, and 'tis a truth that wantonnes will doe ſo too. Some have been ſo mad upon their luſts, that if they could not finde a way, they would make one to meete with their paramours. Upon this conſideration we may fairly interpret this verſe (as the former) concerning the Adulterer. But

Hac domorum profeſſio, non ad latrocinia nocturna, ſed ad turpes aries penetrandi in alienas domos manifeſtè pertinet. Pined:

But I rather conceive that this 16th verſe containes a deſcription of another ſort of ſinners, Theeves or Robbers. Becauſe, though it be true, that Adulterers doe ſometimes digge through houſes, yet this is both more frequently and more properly the buſineſſe of Theeves. Another reaſon to perſwade this underſtanding of the preſent Text may be, becauſe ſo we have a fuller and more particular enumeration of ſeveral ſorts of ſin and ſinners.

Ego libentius hæc de latronibus quam de Adulteris capere; Quia hoc lat ones ſæpe faciunt, Adulteri non niſi per quam raro. Sanct.

In the darke they digge through houſes.

To dig through houſes, is the work of a thiefe. And thus Chriſt ſpeakes of the thiefe (*Luke* 12. 39.) *And this know that if the good man of the houſe had known what houre the thiefe would have come, he would have watched, and not have ſuffered his houſe to have been broken through,* Jacob ſayth of *Simeon* and *Levi* (*Gen.* 49 6.) *In their anger they digged thorow a wall.* Some breake thorow walls for want, or in covetouſneſſe to rob and ſteale, others for anger and in wrath to kill and deſtroy. *They dig thorow houſes.*

Which they had marked for themſelves in the day time.

See the method and cunning of theſe robbers; here are three poynts of their ſinfull skill. Firſt, *they marke houſes*; the word ſignifies, *to marke with a ſeale*; as if they did put their ſeale upon other mens houſes for their own uſe. Theeves goe abroad in the day time to eſpy where they may commit a robbery with beſt advantage, and they ſet their marke upon ſuch houſes as they reſolve to rob; or, which I rather take to be the meaning, they diligently obſerve the ſtrength of the houſe, the ways to the houſe, what company is in the houſe, where they may with moſt eaſe and advantage breake into the houſe. All this they doe in the day by way of preparation, and in the darke they put their purpoſes into execution; *In the darke they digge through houſes which they had marked in the day.*

Hence note.

Sinners would make ſure worke, they would not miſſe.

And therefore they eyther ſet their marke upon a houſe, or exactly marke it. O how witty, and how cunning men are to doe miſchiefe!

Secondly, Whereas they went from Towne to Towne, and any

any houſe they ſaw and liked, they marked it for themſelves.

Learne.

An unjuſt perſon makes every thing his own, if he can come by it, if he can but get it.

He ſaith of another mans houſe, this is mine, I will fill my own houſe with the ſpoyle and plunder of this.

Thirdly, The thiefe marked houſes.

In the day time.

He digged through them in the night, but he made uſe of the day; he would not breake open a houſe in the day, but had ſomwhat to doe towards the breaking open of a houſe in the day, he marked it in the day.

Hence note.

That time which ſuites not one wicked purpoſe, may ſuite another.

The thiefe makes uſe of all times, he makes uſe of the day to marke houſes, and of the night to digge them through. He is carefull to take his time; to doe the worke of the day upon the day, and the worke of the night, in the night.

They know not the light.

But why doth *Job* adde this? ſayd he not before, that they marked houſes for themſelves in the day? How then doth he ſay.

They know not the light.

Knowing is not meant of a bare act of knowledge, as if they knew not when it was light, and when it was darke, or as if they knew not the nature of light, what kinde of creature it is. But, *not to know*, is not to effect; *They know not the light*, that is, they care not, they love not the light. In which ſence words of knowledge are often uſed in Scripture. (*Nah.* 1. 7.) *The Lord knoweth the ſoule that truſteth in him.* The Lord knows thoſe that doe not truſt in him, he knowes thoſe that are unbelieving as well as thoſe that beleeve in a way of diſcerning who they are; but he knowes the ſoule that truſteth in him, in a way of loving and approving him; ſo here, *They know not the light*, that is, they have no love to the light, no delight in the light, they care not for the light.

Non vedere lucem eſt non amare.

light. But it may be objected; It ſhould ſeeme theſe men cared for the light, and liked it well, for they made much uſe of it; *In the day they marked houſes.* I anſwer, When *Job* ſaith, *They know not the light*, we may reſtraine it to one part of their buſineſs, and that the maine, *Their digging through houſes*; for this purpoſe (which was their principall purpoſe) *they knew not the light*, that is, they neither loved nor liked the light, darkneſſe was more welcome to them. I ſhall not give any notes from theſe words here, having before (eſpecially at the 12th verſe, where it is ſaid, *They are ſuch as rebel againſt the light, they know not the wayes of it*, &c.) been ſomewhat large upon the ſame ſubject; As alſo becauſe the next verſe is but a further illuſtration and enforcement of theſe words.

Verſ. 17. *For the morning is to them even as the ſhaddow of death, if one know them they are in the terrours of the ſhaddow of death.*

This verſe gives a reaſon, why theſe theives tooke the night for their worke; or it is an expoſition of what was laſt ſaid, *They know not the light.*

The text may be read thus out of the Originall, *As ſoon as it is morning ſtee ſhadow of death comes upon them.* This Hebraiſme the *ſhaddow of death*, hath been opened at the 5th verſe of the third Chapter, whether I referre the reader. In this place, it onely imports thus much in General, That theſe wicked men did equally fear the morning as death it ſelfe; they were ſurpriſed with feare, as ſoone as ſurpriſed with light. What is the reaſon of it, why doth the adulterer fear the morning, and why doth the theife fear the morning? they do ſo upon theſe three conſiderations.

Umbra mortis i. e. *tam terribilis ut aliquē enecare poteſt.* *Genitivus effecti* Piſc: *Cum venit mane venit umbra, dictum acutè propter ſpeciem contradictionis.*

Firſt, Leſt they ſhould be hindred in their wicked workes; ſecondly, leſt their wicked workes ſhould be diſcerned; thirdly, leſt their wicked works ſhould be puniſhed, for theſe reaſons they hate the light, and *the morning is to them as the ſhaddow of death.*

Hence obſerve.

That good things even the beſt things are a trouble to wicked men.

Sin makes good things evill to us, and pleaſant things troubleſome to us. What a pleaſant thing is the light? How beautifull

are the eyelids of the morning? yet light is a trouble, and the morning a burden to wicked men. And if natural light be a trouble to them, much more is moral and ſpirituall light. How doe they hate the morning of truth, the dawnings of divine knowledge? Theſe lights to life, theſe enlivening lights are to them as the ſhadow of death. In how deplorable a condition are they to whom Good becomes evill, and that which good men rejoyce in, is to them an occaſion of ſorrow. The whole courſe of nature is out of frame to us, till we are ſet into a right frame by grace. We put light for darkneſſe and darkneſſe for light, till we our ſelves are brought out of darknes into light. Nothing is good to us till we are made good, nor doth any thing pleaſe us, except ſin or that which we uſe ſinfully, till we pleaſe God. The very *morning* (which gives a new life to all) is to ſome *as the ſhadow of death.*

If one know them, they are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.

Theſe words are but a further explication of the ſame thing, *if one*, that is, *if any one*, man, woman, or childe, as we ſay, *know* them, that is, take notice of them, in their wickedneſſe, or take notice of their wickedneſſe, they are (as we ſay) *dead in the neſt.*

Cum agnoſcit alius alium. Piſc.

Others render the words thus, *if they know one another*, that is, if only ſo much of the light of the morning breaks forth, as ſerves them to ſee one anothers faces, they are afraid. So this phraſe is uſed (*Ruth* 3. 14.) *And ſhee lay at his feete untill the morning, and ſhee roſe up before one could know another*, that is, before there was light enough to diſcerne each other. So theſe two readings, *if one know them or if they know one another*, meete in the ſame General ſence, their unwillingnes to be diſcovered at their worke; if once there be light enough for theſe evill-workers to ſee themſelves by, they then know they may alſo be ſeene by others; And *one* (any one) *know them:*

They are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.

That is, they are troubled like them, who being ready to dye, are yet unwilling to dye; when death ſtands at a mans bed-ſide, when death ſtands at his back ready to attach and apprehend him, ready to carry him away, while yet he is altogether unwilling and unready to dye, O in what a terrour is he? Juſt thus it is (ſaith *Job*) with thoſe wicked men, they are not only afraid to dye, but

but the terrours of the ſhadow of death are upon them, their terrour is ſuch as men have when death over-ſhadowes them, That's the meaning of, *They are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.*

A ſhadow in Scripture is taken two wayes. Firſt, properly, for that darkeneſſe which is cauſed by the interpoſition of a thick body, between us and the Sunne. Secondly, improperly or metaphorically, and ſo that is a ſhadow which keepes off the heate of the Sunne, or the violence of the rain and winde; and ſo by a trope any thing of defence is called a ſhadow. (*Judg.* 9. 915.) *Come truſt under my ſhadow* (ſaid the bramble) that is, put your ſelves under my protection; And againe (*Iſa.* 30. 2, 3.) *Therefore ſhall the ſtrength of Pharaoh be your ſhame, and the truſt in the ſhadow* (or protection) *of Ægypt your confuſion.* So (*Iſa.* 49. 2.) *In the ſhadow of his hand hath he hid me.* And (*Iſa.* 51. 16.) *I have covered thee in the ſhadow of my hand*; as birds cover or ſhelter their young ones with their wings and feathers. Thus the Scripture ſpeaks of a ſhadow. But what is the ſhadow of death? It is firſt, the appearance of death; ſecondly, the power of death. So the meaning is (as was touched before) they are as much terrified, as if death appeared to them, as if the image of death paſſed before them in viſion, or as if the power of it had taken hold of them to bring them priſoners to the grave.

If one know them, they are in the terrour of the ſhadow of death.

I have from the former words of this context, as alſo at the 12th verſe taken occaſion to obſerve, how troubleſome both the light of the Sunne and the light of the mind are to evill men, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon any Inſtructions of that kinde here.

Yet foraſmuch as not only the murderer and adulterer, ſpoken of before, but the theiſe ſpoken of here, are all for darkeneſſe and concealement.

Obſerve.

Firſt, *That ſinners have a ſecret conviction upon themſelves, that what they doe is not good.*

They draw up their own inditement, and condemn themſelves before God doth. They would rock conſcience aſleepe, but they cannot, they would blind it but they cannot. This their delight in

darkneſſe, both outward and inward, is a plain demonſtration that they know their deeds are evill. Chriſt ſaith as much (*Joh.* 3. 20, 21.) *Every one that doth evill hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved.* No man feares his deeds will be reproved, but he that ſuſpects at leaſt, that his deeds are his faults, and his actings his tranſgreſſings; for as it follows, *He that doth truth* (that is, who acts according to the truth) *cometh to the light.* He that doth good, or truth indeed, yea he who is but perſwaded that he doth ſo, cares not who ſees him; ſome are ambitious to be ſeene while they doe ſo, and though any ſhould be ſo modeſt that they doe not deſire to be ſeen while they do ſo, yet no man that doth ſo is afraid to be ſeene; and uſually ſuch come to the light, to the light of other mens knowledg, & they would come further into the light of their own knowledg; ſuch are free to *come to light of all ſorts, that their deeds may be made manifeſt, that they are wrought in God*; when a man comes to the light he gives a fair evidence that his works are wrought in God, how ever it argues both that he deſires they ſhould be ſuch as are wrought in God, as alſo that he is willing they ſhould come to the tryall, whether they are wrought in God or no, that is, whether they be ſo wrought, as if God did work in him, or whether there be any appearance in them that he hath wrought them in the light and love, in the ſtrength and help of God. Now as when a man comes willingly to the light, it ſhewes that he hath an honeſt perſwaſion in his breaſt, that his workes are good. So when we ſee any ſeeking corners and ſhunning the light by which others may ſee them, or that light by which they may ſee themſelves, this ſhews that they have a troubleſome conviction upon their conſciences, that their works are ſo farre from being wrought in God, that they are wrought againſt God, that is, againſt his mind and will. This, the Apoſtle teacheth in the example of the Old Gentiles (*Rom.* 2. 15.) *They ſhew the worke of the Law written in their hearts, their conſcience bearing them witneſſe, and their thoughts in the mean while accuſing or excuſing one another.* Were there not an undiſtinguiſhable light in nature, by which even a natural man may have ſome glimmerings of and diſcernings between good and evill, he would no more avoyd the ſight of others when he doth evill, then when he doth good. And ſeeing he thus naturally avoydes the view and ſight of all men when he doth evill; This doth

doth more then intimate that there is a Judge above nature, who, *without reſpect of perſons, will reward every man according to his workes.* Conſcience is Gods deputy in man, and what that (being rightly enformed) doth in man. God will doe too. We are ſo aſſured by the Apoſtle *John* (1 *John* 3. 21.) *If our heart condemne us, God is greater then our heart, and knowes all things*; As if he had ſaid, this is an argument that there is a God to condemn, becauſe the heart condemns; *For God is greater then the heart.* God is the ſupreame Judge, the infallible Judge, the heart is but an under-officer unto him. Why ſhould the heart of a man ſmite him? why ſhould he be troubled when he hath done evill? why ſhould he be ſo troubled to be ſeen in doing evill? were it not that there is a God; who judgeth both the hearts and wayes of men; While *the foole ſaith in his heart there is no God*, (Pſal. 14. 1.) the heart of a foole ſaith there is a God: while he ſaith in his heart there is no God to ſee my ſin, his heart ſaith to him, cover thy ſin, that it may not be ſeene, and what Engliſh can we make of this ſaying of his heart, but this, there is a God. For though *Job* ſpake here of ſuch groſſe ſinners as have reaſon enough to hide themſelvs and their doings from the eyes of men, leſt they ſhould bring them both to ſhame & puniſhment, yet even thoſe ſinners are fearfull to have their ſins diſcovered, who need not feare any puniſhment but from the hand of God.

Secondly, Obſerve.

Sin befools the ſinner, or ſinners are very fooliſh.

They are glad if they can eſcape the eye of man, when as their ſins are alwayes under the eye of God. What is the eye from which darkeneſſe can hide us, to that eye which ſeeth through darkenes? *If one ſee them* (ſaith the Text) *they are in the terrors of the ſhadow of death*, and yet they are not terrified that *One* ſeeth them. *That one* ſeeth them alwayes who is more then all men, and yet they are ſatisfyed if they are not ſeen of men. That which they would not doe if a little child did ſee them, they dare doe though the great God of heaven and earth ſee them. What the Prophet ſpeakes of feare in reference to ſuffering, wee may ſay much more of feare in reference to ſinning. (*Iſa.* 51. 12, 13.) *Who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of a man that ſhall dye, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Creator? Who art thou?* ſurely thou art

art so far from being a godly man, that thou art lesse then a man, in this thing, even a foole, and a beast. What? doest thou feare to sin in the presence of a man, or when a man, who shall dye seeth thee, and forgettest that the Lord thy maker seeth thee? that he seeth thee *who hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth*. Well might the Apostle (2 *Thes.* 3.2) joyne these two together, *unreasonable and wicked men*, and give the reason of both in the words which follow, *for all men have not faith*. Where there is no faith, there is much wickednesse, and he who is much in wickednesse, is nothing in reason. Faith is above reason but not against it; wickednesse is not only below reason, but quite against it. They who act against that rule which is given by God to man, act also against that reason which is given by God to man, No man acts so much against faith, as he who doth not beleeve that God seeth him in all his actings, nor doth any man act more against reason, then he who beleeveth that God seeth him, and yet is more afraid to be seene of men, then he is to be seen of God.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 24. Vers. 18.

He is swift as the waters, his portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the Vineyards.

THere are foure apprehensions concerning the generall scope of these words.

First, *Job* is conceived here describing a fourth sort of wicked men, or the same men acting a fourth sort of wickednesse; for having (as hath been shewed from the former words) first drawn out the doings of the murtherer, and secondly, of the Adulterer, and thirdly, of the theife at land digging through houses, he in the fourth place (as some Interpret the text) proceeds to discover the Pyrate, who is a theife upon the water, a Sea-theife; *He is swift as the waters*, or, *he is swift upon the waters*: The letter of the Hebrew, is, *He is swift upon the faces of the waters*; he moves in, and upon all waters. It is usuall in Scripture to call the outward part of any thing, the face of it, as the face of the heavens, is that part of the heavens which doth outwardly appeare to us, or is next to our eye. *O ye hypocrites* (saith Christ, *Matth.* 16.3.) *ye can discern the face of the skie*. So the face of the earth is the superficies, or upper part of the earth, and the face of the waters, is the upper part of the waters. The word in the text is plurall, *faces, he is swift upon the faces of the water*; that is, when he hath murther'd, committed Adultery, and robbed at land, when the Earth is weary of him, then he betakes himselfe to the Sea, and turnes Pyrate. There is a truth in this, some men make such a progresse in wickednesse; they try all trades of sin upon the earth, and then trade sinfully upon the water, defiling both earth and water, both sea and shoare, polluting all the elements with their abominations. And in pursuance of this exposition the two other Clauses of the verse are thus expounded, *Their portion is cursed in the earth*, that is they who live at land curse them when they are gone to sea, fearing lest they should take their ships, & spoyl them of their goods by pyracy. And then, *he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*, that is, he will come no more on shoare, he will not live at land: vineyards by a synecdoche of the part for the whole being

Velociter mare se ad mare recipiunt. Varab. *Levis est ad notandum sive remigandū sive per faciens aquæ.* Targ.

being put for any kind of home or land possession, of which vineyards (in many places) are the chiefe; he who lived by dressing and planting the earth, now takes another course of life; *he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*; he will labour no more in a Country life, he will not get his living by the sweat of his face, but by the face of the waters. What cares he to get wine by dressing of vineyards, when he can get whole ship-loads of wine upon the waters. And having got a smatch of the sweetnes of robbing at Sea, he will worke no more aland. We have too much experience of it, that when a man hath onee given himselfe up to stealeing, he cannot abide labouring. He is better pleased with an easie life that is sinfull, then with an honest life that is painfull; and because ease pleaseth him more then honesty, therefore *he will not behold the way of the Vineyards*, nor the way of the Corne-fields, nor of the pasture grounds, for all these are wayes of labour. But I shall not insist upon this Interpretation, it may suffice onely to name it. And though, as to the thing it selfe, as also to the practice of many, this be a truth, yet it is scarcely probable, that *Job* had that practice in his eye.

Ad piratas referre divinare est ex proprio cerebro, cum hic tantum de infestatoribus agrorum mentio fiat, non navium aut maris. Pined.

Secondly, We may here conceive, that *Job* is describing the miserable and unsetled condition of the murtherer, of the Adulterer, and of the Theife; *he is swift upon the waters*, or, *swift as the waters* (say we) Mr *Broughton* renders, *He is lighter then the face of the waters*. The Hebrew particle serves either-reading, *as*, or upon; *He is swift, or light upon the face of the waters*, that is, he is as a light thing, that swimmeth upon the face of the waters; light things swim there, things which are of no worth, of no price, as strawes, or chips, or feathers, or the foame (which is light and hoven) swim upon the face of the water. Mr *Broughton* translates thus; *He is lighter then the face of the waters*. The sence is the same, for as those things which swim upon the face of the waters are light, so also is the face of the waters. Every blast or puffe of wind moves and tosseth up the face of the waters.

He is swift, or, *light upon the face of the waters.*

Levitas pro velocitate sumitur, leve enim facile movetur & quod facile movetur velox est.

The Hebrew word which we render, *swift*, in our translation signifieth also *light*; because those things that are swift in motion, are light; we say of one that is slow paced, he is heavy heel'd, and that he is a heavy man, or that a heavy beast which is slow of foot; all swift things are light. The meaning of this Interpretation is, that a wicked man is a contemptible Creature; what is he when he hath done all those mischiefes before specified and walketh to wearinesse in all those sinfull wayes? The best account which we can give of him is this; *He is light, or as a light thing, upon the face of the water*; which is a Proverbiall speech to Expresse that which is nothing worth. Thus the destruction of the King of *Samaria* is expressed (*Hos.* 10. 7.) *As for Samaria, her King is cut off as the foame upon the water*, or (as the margin hath it) *upon the face of the water*, that is, though he be a great King, yet he shall perish as a very light, and contemptible thing, even as a little foame and froth, or as a bubble upon the water.

Proverbialis loquutio ad exprimendū aliquid quod flocci pendatur & fere nihil est. Bold. *Leves erunt ut res quæ super aquas natant, fluctuabunt abibant, diffluent.*

Hence observe.

Wickednesse makes men contemptible and vile, they are but as light things upon the water.

In the 21 of this booke (*v.* 18.) the wicked are said to be *as stubble before the fire, and as Chaffe before the whirle-wind*. So (*David*, Psal. 1. 4.) speaking of the wicked in generall, saith, *They are like the chaffe which the wind driveth away*. Stubble and chaffe are light things, and they are also worthlesse things; what's the stubble worth, or what the chaffe? What is the chaffe to the wheat? such are wicked men in comparison of the Godly. The Scripture doth even strive for Expressions (as I may say) to set forth the lightnesse, the vanity, indeed, the nullity, the non-entity, the nothingnesse of men given up to their lusts. *David* (Psal. 62. 9.) speaking of them *who trust in oppression, and become vaine in robbery*, saith, *they are vanity and a lye, and that to be layd in the ballance, they are altogether lighter then vanity*. And *Solomon* putting the tongue of a Godly man, and the heart of a wicked man together into the ballance, gives this determination between them (*Prov.* 10. 20.) *The tongue of the just is as choyce silver, but the heart of the wicked is little worth*. The heart is there taken in the highest sence, for the best thing that the wicked man hath; for though where the heart is nought, it is the worst thing that a man hath, yet the sence of the prover be is to shew that the best thing that a wicked man hath is of little worth, and therefore the instance is made in that which he accounts his chiefest treasure, his heart; for by the heart, all that man hath within him, all the

powers and faculties of the ſoule, with their beſt and richeſt furniture are underſtood; all theſe ſaith *Solomon* in a wicked man are little worth; ſo that take him at his beſt, and in his beſt, he is but traſh or as a triflle. Sin is a reproach both to perſons and nations, as honor is a mans weight in the eſteem of others, ſo reproach abates his weight, & makes him light upon the balance. *Since thou waſt precious in mine eyes, thou waſt honourable*, ſaith God (*Iſa.* 43. 4.) holineſs adds honour and weight to our perſons; ſin makes us light, and then we are lighteſt, when we make light of ſin; ſin is a weight that preſſeth us down, yet they who ſin moſt, weigh leaſt in the eſteeme of God and of all good men. Sin will quickly ſinke the ſoul like lead under water, even to the bottome of the water, yet the ſinner is as a light thing that ſwims upon the top or face of the water. This is a profitable ſence of the words.

Thirdly, Others expound theſe words, as a deſcription of the wicked mans ſhifting and running from place to place for fear of purſuers; or that being conſcious to himſelfe, or ſelf-condemned in his own conſcience, he is as the Lord threatned *Cain* (Gen. 4. 14.) *a fugitive and a vagabond upon the earth*: ſwift as the waters of a ſtreame, which glide along and never ſtay in one place; or he is upon the earth as a light thing upon the waters, continually moved and toſſed up and downe. But I paſſe from this. And conclude.

Fourthly, That we may rather underſtand theſe words as a deſcription of the ſpirit and temper of a wicked man in reference to his ſinfull actings, or the fulfilling of his luſts; *He is ſwift or light as the water*, or, *as the light things upon the water*, that is, he is a man very unſetled, he is hurryed to and fro, there is no ſtability either in his wayes, or in his ſpirit; He abides not in one place, nor doth he abide in one mind. He is full of Inconſtancy, he is conſtant in nothing but in his unconſtancy: and it muſt needs be ſo if we Conſider,

Firſt, his luſt within. How can he but be ſwift as the water, who hath ſuch winds blowing and ſtriving in him. A carnall man is hurryed with ſtormes and tempeſts riſing in his own minde: as the wind toſſeth and rolleth the waters of the Sea or light things upon the water, ſo the luſts of evill men toſſe and tumble them up and down. Pride toſſeth ſome, and Covetouſneſſe toſſeth others, luxury and wantonneſſe toſſe thouſands into a thouſand

ſand vanities, and ſinfull wayes, as the winds toſſe the waves of the Sea; Luſts are ſtrong and boyſterous, luſts are many and numerous, he that ſerveth any one of them is a ſlave to them all, and muſt goe upon their errand whatſoever they will ſend or rather hurry him.

Secondly, Carnall men muſt needs be ſwift as the water, or light upon the water, very unconſtant and unſetled if we conſider the temptations that blow upon them from without. For though our own luſts are temptations, and *every man* (as the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, Chapter 1. 14.) *is tempted when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed*, yet our luſts alſo are tempted, or our luſts are drawn away and enticed by temptation. Man is apt enough to ſin of himſelfe alone, if once God leave him, but he is ſeldome left to himſelfe alone to ſin by the Devill; and moſt uſually he is tempted with a kind of violence unto ſinne; his luſts (which are a fire) are blown and kindled by Satans breath, and he is driven to doe evill by vehement blaſts of temptation. Temptations blow upon Saints, they blow ſtrongly upon them; Satan breaths out a mighty wind to make them ſwift as the water unto ſin; but they have received a power to reſiſt and ſtand faſt. They are founded upon the rocke Jeſus Chriſt; Though the winde moves the water, yet it cannot move the rocke: they that are founded upon Chriſt, are (in their proportion) firme as Chriſt himſelfe is firme. 'Tis true, Saints are many times grievouſly ſhaken with temptations, but the wicked are toſſed and overwhelmed by them. They are ſwift as the water, or as the lighteſt thing upon the face of the waters, when ſtrongly moved by temptation. Dying *Jacob* called *Reuben*, his firſt-born, *unſtable as water* (Gen. 49. 4.) though we will not number him among the wicked, yet he did a very wicked act, and in reference to that, though he was a great man, and a Patriarke, the head of the Tribe, yet (in reference to that act) he received this Character, *unſtable as water*. And if he was ſo unſtable when hurryed by paſſion and temptation, how much more are meer wicked men ſo, when they meet with ſuch temptations. For as they are not fixed in any thing that is good, as was touched at the 13th verſe, *They know not the wayes of light, nor do they abide in the paths of it* (if at any time they ſtumble upon the doing of that which is right, yet they abide not in the doing of it; they are light as the water, unſtabled and unſetled in

all good wayes) So though they are fixed (as to the ſubject) in doing that which is evill, yet they are extreamly toſſed and ſwiftly moved, both to and in and after the doing of it.

Againe. As this ſimilitude implyes the eaſineſſe of evill men to be moved by temptation unto ſinne, even as eaſily as water, or the lighteſt things upon the face of the water are moved by the wind. So it implyeth alſo their ſpeedineſſe and activity in ſinning. The water moves ſwiftly, ſinners are like ſwift ſhips upon the water, they make ſpeed to do evill, or to trade upon any forbidden coaſt, but they are very ſlugs to any thing that is good, or to trade upon any coaſt where they are bidden. A learned Interpreter inſiſts much upon the emphaſis of this Expreſſion, to ſhew not only the ſwiftneſſe, but the feirceneſſe of a wicked mans ſpirit in ſinning, he is ſwift upon the face of thoſe waters, and is carryed on with full ſayles in ſinning, he runs ſo ſwiftly and treads ſo lightly, that he might run even upon the ſurface of the water and not ſink. Thoſe creatures which are very ſwift, leave little Impreſſion behinde them; they that goe ſlowly tread heavy, and unleſſe they be upon firme land, fall in. It is ſaid in the 8. of *Daniel* (ver. 5.) concerning the *hee-goat* (who repreſented *Alexander* the Great) That *he touched not the ground*. *Alexander* was extreame ſwift in his Conqueſts, he Conquered the world in as little time as another could have travel'd over it His motto was, *Without delay*; or, *I doe all by making no delay*; He was ſwift upon the face of the earth. Thus wicked men are light upon the face of the water, that is, they are ſwift and fierce for the attaining of their ſinfull ends they run as nimbly at it, as if they could run upon the top of a corne field, and never preſſe a ſtraw, or as if they could run upon the water, and never wet their feete. By which hpperbolies the ancient Poets uſed to expreſſe the greateſt celerity of motion. We have a proverbiall ſaying among us, which reacheth this ſwiftneſſe of a wicked man in ſin; *He* (ſay we) *muſt needs run whom the Divil drives*. There is no doubt but evill men are Devil-driven, yea Devil-ridden, he rides them with whip and ſpurre to the doing of his black worke, and therefore no wonder, if they are ſo ſwift and make ſuch haſt about it. That they make haſt to doe it is too viſible, and that they make more haſt then good ſpeed is as viſible. For while they make haſt to ſin, they make haſt alſo to the curſe. As it follows in the next words.

De facilitate peccandi ang. velocitate ad caſtandū, quā ex ejus ſcelceris occaſionem intelligi poſſe videtur.

Tam leviter in terra figunt pedem, ut etiam ſuper aquas incedere poſſe videantur. Sanct.

Their

Their portion is curſed in the earth.

Job ſpake in the ſingular number before, but here in the plural, *He is ſwift*, &c. *Their portion*, &c. His meaning (I conceive) may be this; That looke how many ſoever they be of them that are thus ſwift to ſin, there's not one of them ſhall be able to outrun the curſe. They are ſwift as the water to doe evil, but the curſe will be as ſwift as the winde to make them miſerable.

Their portion is curſed.

The word ſignifieth any thing which falls to a man of right, or is beſtowed upon him for his lot or ſhare. חֵלֶק *pars portio, poſſeſſio.*

Firſt, that part or portion, which comes by way of Inheritance, is ſo expreſſed (*Gen.* 31. 14 *Deut.* 12. 12.) The Inheritance that a father gives his ſon is his portion.

Secondly, It ſignifies that part, ſhare, or lot of food, which is given out to any man for his dayly proviſion. (*Deut.* 18. 8.)

Thirdly, It notes that which is given to the poore by way of almes (*Eccl.* 11. 2.) *Give a portion to ſeven, and alſo to eight*; (that is, give to many) *for thou knoweſt not what evill ſhall be upon the earth*. It is uſed alſo for a ſhare, or diſtribution of the ſpoyl to each Souldier after a victory (*Gen.* 14. 24.) *Aner, Eſhcol. and Mamre, let them take their portion*, ſaid *Abraham* to the King of *Sodome*, after he had reſcued his brother *Lot* and the captivated Kings. In this place the word is taken in the largeſt ſence, as comprehending whatſoever they could call theirs, or was any way belonging to them; So that when *Job* ſaith, *their portion is Curſed*, his meaning is, all that they have is curſed. As they have ſinned in all they did, ſo they are curſed in all they have. The Grace of God in the Goſpel is compared to leven (*Matth.* 13. 33.) *which a woman tooke and hid in three pecks of meale, till the whole was levened*. As the Grace of God both in regenerating and comforting runs through the whole man, ſo the curſe of God like leven ſowres the whole lump of man, it runs through all that a man is or hath.

Pulchra eſt in Hebræo paranomaſia verborum jugatorum nam levis & maledictus ab eadem radice קלל *oriuntur. Levis-catio eſt maledictis.* Pined:

Their portion is curſed.

There is an Elegant *paranomaſia* in the Hebrew between theſe two words in the text, *ſwift*, or *light*, and *Curſed*; They being both repre-

represented by one radicall word, and the reason of it is, because those things that are light, or contemptible, are cursed, or in a cursed condition. *They that honour me* (saith the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 2. 10) *I will honour, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed*, or, *they shall be cursed*. There the same word is used in the Originall, which in the present text, we translate *cursed*. To curse a man is to slight him to the utmost, and we never esteeme so lightly or basely of any thing or person, as when we curse either the one or the other.

Their portion is Cursed in the earth.

Maledicere est leviter de aliquo sentire levibus acerbisq; scommatibus aliorum proscindere.

But by whom are they cursed? or who curseth them? I may answer, They are cursed both by God and man. As if *Job* had said, their doings have been such upon the earth, that, first, all men curse them, and secondly, God curseth them. Some are cursed by men, and yet God blesseth them, others are blessed or highly esteemed by men, yet God curseth them. But these men are such who as they please not God, so they are contrary to all men (as the Apostle spake of some, 1 *Thes.* 2. 15.) and therefore God and man joyne in their curse. *Their portion is cursed*

In the earth.

That is, in all their earthly concernments, or they are cursed even here while they are upon the earth, where they think themselves, and where, possibly, some others think them also, most blessed. For though they have gotten much in the earth, or of earthly things, yet all they have gotten is cursed, and therefore all that they have is cursed, for they have got nothing beyond the earth.

Againe, These words may be read by way of Imprecation (we read them by way of assertion) *let their portion be cursed in the earth*; Like that (*Psal.* 109 8, 9, 10, 11.) *Let his dayes be few, and let another take his office, let his children be fatherlesse, &c.* Some of the ancients make the Paraphrase thus; *Let the roots of what they sow or plant appeare bare in the earth*, when the root of a tree, or the roots of corne appeare above ground, both tree and corne must needs wither, for want of moysture For as the earth feeds the root, so the root feeds the stocke, and the stocke the branches. That is a cursed tree which beares no fruit according

Appareant plantæ eorum super terrã aridæ, i.e. cum conseverint agros suos non gerimnet terra.

ing to its kinde, and that tree whose root is not suckled by the earth can bear no fruit. Every wicked man is either cursed in not bringing forth fruit, or else the fruit which he brings forth is cursed. And therefore *Their portion is* (every way) *cursed in the earth.*

There is yet another Interpretation of these words, which I shall but briefly touch and passe on. *Their portion is Cursed in the Earth*, that is, the Region, or place where they dwell is Cursed; They dwell in desolate places, or they skulke up and downe in deserts and wildernesses, having done so much mischiefe among men that they dare not shew their faces where they are knowne. Now, deserts and desolate places may justly be called cursed places, because of their barrennesse, for barrenness is the curse which God laid upon the earth for the sin of man (*Gen.* 4. 17.) As a fruitful land may be called a blessed Land, because the blessing of God maketh a Land fruitfull (*Isaac* said to his Son *Jacob* (*Gen.* 27. 27.) *The smell of my Son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed*, that is, as the smell of a fruitfull field) So it may be said that the earth or land where a man lives, and his portion in it is cursed while he lives in a barren desolate land, which looks as if it were under the perpetuall curse of God. And according to this interpretation, the latter part of the verse (*and he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*) may be thus understood; He comes not into any fruitfull fields; Vineyards are planted in a fruitfull soyle, and fruitfull vines are full of the blessing of God. Thus as the portion of the wicked in the earth is alwayes cursed, by a decree from God, so it may be said that their portion is sometimes cursed by their own Election, because for the better secreting and hiding of themselves from the eye of Justice, they spend their dayes in such places as by reason of their wastnesse and barrenness seeme to confesse themselves under a curse. *Their portion is cursed in the earth.*

Describit quomodo sese gerere soleant: ut sua maleficia cõmodius regant eligunt sibi sedes in vastis locis; unde dicit, nec se convertit ad vias vinearum quia vineæ in locis cultis suæ sunt non procul ab urbibus. Merc.

Hence note.

First, *Sin brings a curse with it.*

When *Job* had described the wickednesse of these men, their murthers, their adulteries, and their thefts, he concludes, *Their portion is cursed.* Sin calleth for a Curse from men, and it calleth for a Curse from God. *Solomon* saith (*Prov.* 11. 26.) *He that with-*

withholdeth Corne (that is, who hoards it up and will not ſell it at a reaſonable rate, reſolving to make a dearth when God hath made none, he who thus *withholdeth Corne*) *the people will curſe him*. Now if the people curſe him that will not let them have corn for money, then much more him that ſtealeth or taketh away their corne without money. He that deſtroyeth other mens goods, gets a Curſe inſtead of good. *Eliphaz* ſaith (*Chap.* 5.3.) *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking roote, but ſuddenly I curſed his habitation*, that is, I ſaw his habitation was curſed, or under a curſe, I knew what would become of him ſhortly. In ſome caſes it may be lawfull for man to wiſh a Curſe upon man, and the Curſe of man may be the Curſe of God too; and uſually it is ſo, when any man is generally curſed by men. *The voyce of the people is the voyce of God.* When a man is followed with a Curſe from the moſt of men good and bad, it is an argument that there is a Curſe gone out from God againſt him; and that *his portion is Curſed in the earth*. Sin is the deſerving or procuring Cauſe, and the wrath of God is the inflicting or productive Cauſe of the Curſe. *Balaak* hired *Balaam* to Curſe the people of God, but the Curſe could not take, the traine was laid, but he could not make the powder take fire, the Curſe came not, why? the reaſon is given, yea *Balaam* himſelfe gives it (*Numb.*23.21.) *He* (that is, God) *hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſſe in Iſrael.* If there had been iniquity, that is any national iniquity or publick iniquity, perſiſted in and not repented of among them, that had brought the Curſe inevitably; but though *Balaam* laboured to Curſe them, though he went from hill to hill, and tryed all means to get an opportunity to Curſe them, yet he could not, *for* (ſaith he) *God hath bleſſed them, and I cannot reverſe it. There is no Iniquity in Jacob, nor perverſneſſe in Iſrael*, therefore their portion was bleſſed in the earth. Sin in whomſoever it is hath a curſe in the belly or bowells of it. Even Chriſt himſelfe taking our ſin upon him, was neceſſitated to take the curſe upon him which was due to our ſin; Chriſt taking our ſin upon him, was (as the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21.) *made ſin for us*, that is an offering or a ſacrifice for our ſin, yea as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith (*Gal* 3.13.) *He was therefore made a curſe for us.* And if Chriſt who (having no ſin in him) did only take our ſin upon him, could not avoyd the curſe, how ſhall they avoyd it, who (having no part in Chriſt) have all manner of ſin in them? But

Vox populi vox dei.

But it may be objected, All men ſin, and yet many have no appearance of a Curſe upon them, nor is *their portion Curſed in the earth?*

I anſwer, Firſt, This aſſertion is to be limited to unbeleevers or ungodly men. Secondly, unbeleevers and ungodly men are under a Curſe, though the Curſe doe not breake out and appeare viſibly upon them. As the portion of a godly man may be bleſſed, though there be no appearance of the bleſſing; when nothing appeares upon him but affliction and the croſs, yet the godly man is bleſſed. The Croſſe of a godly man is like the proſperity of a wicked man. The former hath an outward Croſſe, but a Bleſſing at the bottome; the latter hath outward proſperity, but a curſe at the bottome, and bitterneſſe in the end. Again, the peace of the prophane, is like the grace of hypocrites, onely a ſhew; hypocrites have a ſhew of grace, an appearance of holyneſſe, yet they are but painted Sepulchres, full of rottenneſſe within; So the wicked have a ſhew of peace and proſperity, of benefits and bleſſings, but a curſe is within them, and a curſe hangs over them, ready every moment to drop down upon their heads. For

Secondly, His portion is curſed, that is, 'tis under a curſe, though the curſe be not actually inflicted. As the mercies of God are ſure to his people, yet many times very ſlow, they come not preſently, but they will come. So alſo the wrath and curſe of God will ſurely come upon the wicked, though, as to outward effects & impreſſions, they are ſlow and long in coming. Actings of mercy are for an appointed time, *Every viſion is for an appoynted time* (as the Lord told his Prophet, *Hab.* 2 3.) The viſion of Judgment and wrath is for an appointed time, as well as the viſion of love and mercy; That is, all the love, and all the wrath, the bleſſing, and the curſe, which are revealed, (in any way of viſion, are for an appointed time) *but at the end the viſion will ſpeake and not lye; if it tarry, waite for it, for it will ſurely come and not tarry.* As it is (I ſay) in the viſions of mercy and bleſſing, ſo in thoſe of wrath, and of the curſe; *They are for an appointed time*, in the end they will ſpeake. Sometimes the Curſe is quick, it apprehendeth the ſinner in the very act, it takes him in the manner, as *Phineas* did *Zimri* and *Cozbi*. And as (*Pſal.*78.30.) *While their meate was yet in their mouthes, the wrath of God came upon them.* The found of the Curſe is ſomtimes at the heeles of ſin, at other times

the sound of the Curse is a great way behind the sin, no sight nor sound of the curse for a long time. As, *light is sown for the righteous* (Psal. 97. 11.) that is, They shall have a crop of good things, though it lye, as seed doth, a great while under the clods, and as dead in the furrowes; So darknesse is sown for the wicked, they perceive it not yet, but they shall be wrapt up in it for ever; yea while they perceive it not, they are in it, and they are by so much the more in it by how much the lesse they perceive it. For, this is ever true; *The portion of the wicked is cursed in the earth*, though they seeme compassed about with blessings. *I will curse your blessings*, saith the Lord, (*Mal.* 2. 2.) *yea I have cursed them already*. The wicked may be rich, and yet cursed, honourable, and yet cursed, successeful in busienesse, and yet cursed, blessed, and yet cursed, God doth curse their blessings. That which is a blessing in the kind and matter of it, is to some a curse in the use & issue of it, So then, *as Godlinesse is profitable for all things, & hath the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come* (1 Tim. 4. 8.) Godlinesse is compassed about and cloathed with promises of all sorts and seasons. So ungodlinesse is unprofitable for all things, & makes him that is so, miserable in all things. For *it hath the curse of this life, and of that which is to come*, if the promise doe not meet a godly man in this life, or in the things of this life, yet it will in the life to come, and in the things of the life to come, yea in all things so far as concerns the life to come, the blessing alwayes meets him. And if the curse do not meet a wicked man in this life, yet it will in the life to come, and in the things of the life to come, yea in all things so farre as concernes the life to come, The curse alwayes meetes him.

Then see the folly of those, who feare the Curse, and are not afraid of sin; as if a man should fear drowning, and yet cast himselfe into the water, or fear burning, and yet throw himselfe into the fire; thus doe they who love sin, and feare the curse. If the beauty of holinesse doth not take upon the heart, yet the curse that attends sin may deterre from medling with it. And did men know the terrour of the Lord, (as the Apostle speakes, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) they would easily be perswaded to take heed of sin, even of every sin, for though usually great sins bring the curse, yet the least sins may. They who know what the curse of the Lord is, cannot but know what the terror of the Lord is, that is, that the Lord

Lord is (to sinners) very terrible. For the curse of the Lord abiding upon a sinner, makes him every way and alwayes miserable. There needs no more to be said to prove a man miserable then this, *that his portion is cursed*, or that he is under the curse. For as the blessing of God makes us happy with any portion, that's enough, the blessing being it self the best and most aboundant portion (Every good thing is vertually in the blessing) so the Curse is vertually every evill thing; therefore that must needs make a man miserable. When the Lord blesseth, it is not an empty word, but a power goes with it to make a man blessed; And when the Lord curseth, it is not an empty word, but a power goes with it, to make a mans *portion cursed in the earth*. *Job* having laid down this position, gives a proofe of it in the last words of the verse.

He beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.

Some read these (as the former) words, by way of imprecation; *Let his portion be cursed in the earth, and let him not behold the way of the vineyards.* We translate assertively, *He beholdeth not*, &c.

Cohærebit cum superioribus si hæc sit quasi præcedentis expositio imprecationis. Nullam habeat impius partem in agris locisq; frugiferis, ex quibus ullum fructum percipere possis. Pined.

But what is meant here *by not beholding?* is it onely this, he cometh not within the view or sight of them? I conceive there is more in it then so, and that when *Job* saith, *he beholdeth not*, his meaning is, he enjoyeth vineyards no more, or he dwelleth no more in a fruitfull and pleasant land, such as that land is which aboundeth in vineyards, and so consequently with wine, but he shall live miserably in a barren soyle. So that we may now interrogate wicked men, whether murtherers, Adulterers, or theeves (as *Paul* doth every sinner, *Rom.* 6. 21.) *What fruit have ye of those things, whereof ye are* (or ought to be) *ashamed?* have ye any fruit of the vine? surely no, For *such behold not the way of the vineyards.* To behold is to enjoy the pleasantness, to tast the sweetness of the fruit of the *vineyards*. Wine which is the fruit of the vineyard is pleasant and delightfull, it makes glad the heart of man (*Psal.* 104. 15) And vineyards are here named to signifie all sorts of outward good things, they being the chiefe of outward good things; For as somtimes bread signifieth all outward good things, because that strengthens mans heart; so Wine, because that cheareth and comforteth the heart of man. So that when *Job* saith, *He shall not behold the way of the vineyards*; It is as if he had said, *He shall not tast of or enjoy any good thing.* For

 Againe,

Againe, Those words, *he beholdeth not* &c. are not to be understood as if he did voluntarily refuse to behold, or cared not to behold the way of the vineyards, but as implying a force or constraint upon him, by which he was kept or hindred from looking that way.

Whence take this briefe note.

The losse of good is a great misery as well as the enduring of evill.

It hath been questioned which is greater, the punishment of losse, or the punishment of paine; but without all question, losse is a very great punishment; not to behold the way of the vineyards, not to returne to house and land, to wife and children, is a sore affliction. What will it then be never to behold the face of God, but to be under a sentence of eternall banishment from his presence. His portion is cursed in the earth, here in this world, who beholdeth not the way of the vineyards, how then is his portion cursed in the next world, who shall never behold the path or way of life?

There are yet severall other readings and expositions of these words.

Abstinebit a via regia et frequentia hominum ne cognoscatur. Vatabl.

First, As if the meaning were to shew the wicked mans feare of being seene, because of his guilt, and that therefore he would not behold or come neere *the way of the vineyards*, that is, those places which many people have occasion to frequent.

Ita festinat fugere, ut ne prius quidem vineas olim tam gratas aspiciat. Isidor.

Secondly, As if *Job* would here shew what hast men make to escape who are under guilt; As if he had said, The wicked man will be so *set upon the run*, That he will not stay so much as to view or behold his own vineyards, formerly so delightfull and pleasant to him.

Thirdly, It is conceived to be a proverbiall speech, according to which it was ironically said of Malefactors who were led forth to suffer death, *They behold not the way of the vineyards*; No they behold onely the way to the Gibbet or place of execution.

Non refluet, secundum consuetudinem Abissinorum.

Fourthly, Others divide the word *Cheramim*, which we translate, *vineyards* into two; that is into *Chi*, a particle of similitude or likenesse, and *Ramim* which signifies, either *persons*, or *things that are high*. Hence *Junius* translates, *He shall not returne or flow backe againe, he shall fall after the manner of things that are high.*

high. And he expounds the sence of his owne translation; *He shall not returne to his former state, as waters doe which ebbe and flow; but as waters which fall from a high place cannot goe backe, so shall he remaine cast down for ever.* Water being a heavy body must have a descent, it cannot ascend naturally, therefore the water that falls from a high place is gone, and cometh not againe. The wicked man perisheth, as waters that flow from a high place and returne no more.

Non prospicit incessum suum excelsorum, i.e. *non curabit incedere eo modo, quo solent incedere illi qui dignitate vel potentia alios præsunt* Bold.

Another following that division of the word, renders the clause thus; *He doth not looke to* (or *provide for*) *his way or his going, as of the high ones*; that is, he shall never goe in that pompe or equipage, in which they goe who are above others in power and dignity. As if he had said, he shall ever live in a low, meane and miserable condition; *He shall no more behold the way of the high while he lives*; nor (which the same Author cleaves to as the most genuine interpretation) shall he take care or provide to be buryed according to the way, customs, or manner of the high ones when he dyeth.

But, I shall not insist upon either of these rendrings, though they all fall into one common channel with the former, which is to set forth that the wicked man is under a curse, or that his portion is cursed in the earth, yea, *that a curse is his portion.* Nor shall I (having often observed from other texts of this book the woful end of wicked men, for this reason, I say, I shall not) stay to give any further observations from this clause, according to any of the rendrings of it: of all which I most embrace that of our owne translaters, *He shall not behold the way of the vineyards*, not onely because most of the learned Hebricians render it so, but first, because most of the Originall words in the text; And secondly, because it carryes (to my thoughts) so faire a correspondence with the words which follow in the two next verses.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 24. Vers. 19,20.

Drought and heate, consume the snow waters, so doth the grave those which have sinned.
The womb shall forget him, and the worme shall feed sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembred, and wickednesse shall be broken as a tree.

THere are two different translations of the 19th verse; I shall propose them and then explicate our owne.

Firſt, thus; *In the drought and heate they rob, and in the snow water, they sin to the grave.*

Secondly, (to the same sence by way of similitude) *like as the dry earth and heate drink up the snow water, so they sin even to the grave.*

Both these rendrings carry in them two things generally remarkable.

Firſt, The obstinacy, and perseverance of wicked men in sin while they live.

Secondly, Their impunity in sin untill death.

In the drought and heate they rob, and in the snow water.

That is, they rob and spoyle at all times, or in all the seasons of the yeare, in hard times, in the hardest times, in the extreamity of drought, and in the extreamity of cold, They never give over, *they sin to the grave.* This reading is much insisted upon by some, and as the sence is usefull, so the text may bear it. For the verbe גזל *rapuit vi & aperiè res aut personas.* signifies to snatch a thing openly, and forceably, as well as to consume secretly, and so may be rendred by *robbing*, as well as by *consuming.*

In drought and heat they rob, and in the snow waters.

Firſt, We may consider this drought and heate with the snow water as expressing those seasons which are very troublesome to the wicked man, to doe his work in, to rob, and spoyle: extream heate, and extreame cold, are great impediments to action, yet in heate and snow they rob.

Whence

Whence observe.

A wicked man will breake through all difficulties, to find a way to his beloved sin.

Though he be in danger of melting with heat, or of freezing with cold yet he will rob, or doe any other mischiefe that his heart is set upon: neither heate, nor cold, neither wett, or dry, shall keepe him in, yea though an Angel with a drawn sword in his hand stand in his way (as in the way of *Balaam*) yet, when he hath a mind, he will goe on. We may say of every bold and presumptuous sinner, that he sins in heat and cold, he sins in the sight of wrath and death. The threatenings (which are the portion of such) have the extreamity of heat and cold in them; The threatnings have sword and fire in them, wrath and death in them, yet the wicked sin in the face of them, and (upon the matter) dare them to doe their worst. A godly man, whose heart is bent and set heaven ward, will walke on his way, though he must passe through heat, and cold, though he meete with dangers, and difficulties, though he meete many Lions in his way, yet he will not turne out of his way. *Paul* saith of himselfe and his fellow-labourers (2 *Cor.* 6. 4.) *In all things approving our selves as the Ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments*, &c. And a little after (*v.* 8.) *By honour, and dishonour, by evill report, and good report*, &c. Here was working in heate and cold, in fire and frost, in all sorts of providences from God, in all sorts of aspects from men. *Paul* and his colleagues, never minded what men did to them, but what the mind of God was they should doe. And thus every godly man workes, or doth the worke of God. For though every Godly man attaines not to such a degree of zeale and holy courage as *Paul* had; yet he hath a truth of zeale and holy courage which will (according to his measure) carry him through a world of evills and incombrances, to the doing of that good, which duty and conscience, or the conscience of his duty calls him to. Now as Godly men labour to approve themselves the Ministers or servants of God, so ungodly men will approve themselves the servants of sin in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, and in distresses; they will run all hazzards, and venture through all extreamities, rather then leave the law of a lust unfulfilled. The Lord

put

put the *Jewes* to much ſuffering for their ſins, yet ſin they would; *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more,* (ſaith he, *Iſa.* 1. 5.) *Ye will revolt more and more*; while I have been ſtriking, ye have been revolting. The ſame pertinacy is complained of (*Iſa.* 57. 17.) *I ſmote him, and was wrath, yet he went on frowardly in the way of his heart*; that is, in a ſinfull way. The heart of man knowes no other way, till himſelf is formed after the heart of God, and in that ſinfull way he will goe, though God make his heart ake as he goes, *I ſmote him, and was wroth, yet he went on*, &c.

In drought and heate they rob, and in the ſnow water.

Againe, we may take drought, heate, and ſnow water, not only as importing their ſufferings while they were doing in ſuch times, but alſo as importing the ſeverall ſeaſons of time, as if he had ſaid, *they will ſin both winter and ſummer*, that is, continually; we ſay of ſome, *they are never well neither full nor faſting*; As full and faſting imply all the conditions of man, ſo hot and cold, ſummer and winter, imply all diviſions of time.

Hence note.

Evill men will doe evill allwayes.

Sinning time is never out with them, they doe not ſin by fits or ſtarts, in an ill mood onely, or through a ſtreſſe of temptation; but they ſin from a principle within, they have a ſpring of wickedneſs within, and that will ever be ſending and flowing out. A good man may be overtaken with ſin at any time, but he doth not ſin at all times, in winter, and ſummer, in heat, and cold. Corruption will be working where Grace is, but where Grace is not, nothing workes but corruption. If wicked men be not doing evill in every moment of time, it is not becauſe they at any time would not doe evill, but becauſe at all times they cannot; And therefore the tranſlation now underhand ſpeakes of their whole life as one continued act of ſin.

They ſin to the grave.

That is, till they dye, and ſo are caryed out to the grave. So that this manner of ſpeaking, *They ſin to the grave.* ſignifies the utmoſt perſeverance of wicked men in ſinning; as if it had not been enough to ſay, they ſin in heate, and cold, winter, and ſummer, but

but they ſin out the laſt inch of time, even till they come to the graves mouth.

Whence Note.

Wicked men will not ceaſe to ſin, while they continue to live.

The Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Pet.* 2. 14.) ſaith of that generation, *who have eyes full of adultery, and that cannot ceaſe from ſin*, ſin is their nature, it is not what they have acquired, but what is implanted in them, and borne with them. And becauſe ſin is naturall to them, therefore they cannot get it off untill their nature is changed. And hence it is that *converſion* or regeneration is the change of our nature as well as of our actions. A man unregenerate ſins as naturally as he lives: he ſins as naturally as he ſees or heares, or exerciſeth any of thoſe naturall faculties, ſo naturally doth he ſin, and therefore he ſins to the grave. And this is a rationall demonſtration of the Juſtice of God in awarding eternall puniſhment for ſin committed in time, or in a ſhort time (the whole time of a mans life, in which ſin is committed, is but a ſhort time, a nothing to eternity wherein ſin ſhall be puniſhed. This, I ſay, is a demonſtration of the Juſtice of God in puniſhing wicked men) becauſe if they could have lived to eternity, they would have done evill to eternity, they doe evill as they can, and as long as they can. Seeing then, there is a principle in man to ſin eternally, it is but juſt with God if he puniſh ſinners eternally: did not the grave ſtop him, his heart would never ſtop him from ſin. *In heate and cold they rob, they ſin to the grave.*

Further as theſe words are put into a ſimilitude, they intimate the eaſineſſe, and naturallneſſe of their ſinning, as well as the continuance of it; *Like as the hot earth drinketh up the ſnow water, ſo wicked men ſin to the grave*: they ſin to death, and they ſin with as much eaſe and naturalnes as the earth, when dry and thirſty, drinks up the ſnow water. Sinners are ſaid to *drinke iniquity as water*, (Job 15. 16.) They are ſaid *to draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with cart ropes*, (Iſa. 5 18.) The laſt of theſe compariſons notes their ſtrength and groſſeneſſe in ſinning; The ſecond notes their wit and cunning in ſinning; The third (which ſuits with the preſent text) notes their readynes and eaſineſſe to ſinne; They can doe it as eaſily as drinke, as eaſily as the hot earth drinketh up the ſnow water.

So much of that translation; I come now to consider our owne,

Drought and heate consume the snow waters.

צִיָּה *siccitas proprie aridita-tem terræ signi-ficat, unde pro terra arida & in'ta fumitur.*

Drought or drineſſe; The word notes the drineſſe of the earth, and is often put for dry earth, as alſo for earth undreſt, or for a deſert place, becauſe in ſuch places the earth is uſually parcht with heate and over-dry. And hence the word (*Tſijm*) in the plurall number ſignifies a people that dwell in a wilderneſſe, or in a deſert. So the people of *Iſrael* were called while they marched ſlowly through it to *Canaan* (Pſal. 74. 14.) *Thou brakeſt the head of the Leviathan, and gaveſt him to be meate for the people, who dwelt in the wilderneſs.* And as men, ſo thoſe wild beaſts that dwelt in deſerts, or ſolitary places are called *Tſijm*; (Iſa. 34. 14.) *The wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall alſo meet with the wild beaſts of the land, and the Satyr ſhall cry to his fellow, the Shrich-Owle alſo ſhall reſt there, and finde for himſelfe a place of reſt.* *Tſijm* are ſuch uncouth creatures as inhabit *Tſijah*, dry and deſert places. *Drought*

לְעֵינֵי לְצִיִּים *populo ſolitudinicolis, aut de ſerta incolentibus.*

And heate.

חַם a חמם *calluit Hebræis Cham calidum, et cham nigrum ſmaltbine Cham mi nomen a calore vel nigredine.*

Cham the originall word ſignifies both to be hot, and to be blacke; The ſecond ſonne of *Noah*, (who mocked his father) was named *Cham*, and it is ſuppoſed that the poſterity of *Cham* inhabited *Africa*, which is alſo called *Ammonia*, being a hot Country, and the people of it blacke. And from this Hebrew word (it is conceived) the Heathens alſo called the *Sun Jupiter Hammon*; and they had Sun-Images called *Chammiamin* (Levit. 26. 30) which they worſhipped.

Jupiter Hammon.

Drought and heate conſume the ſnow water.

The word (as many other in the Hebrew) hath a neerneſſe of ſound as well as in ſence with our Engliſh word *guſſell*, and we ſay of Great drinkers. They are Guzzlers. The dry earth *and heate* guſſell or drinke in the ſnow water, as the intemperate perſon guſſels and drinks down his liquor. Thus, *drought and heate conſume the ſnow water*, that is, the ſnow when melted into water.

So

So doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned.

שְׁאוֹל חָטָאוּ *mira brevitas qua obſcuritatem parit, non dubium eſt ſimilitudinem eſſe. Merc.*

There is a wonderfull conciſenes in the Hebrew, we find there no particle of likenes, nor is there any expreſſion of *thoſe that*, as appeares by the different letter in our tranſlation, yet there is no doubt but the words carry in them the force of a ſimilitude, therefore we may ſafely ſupply them, according to our reading;

So doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned.

The ſame word is uſed indifferently in the Originall both for the grave and hell; both ſignifications are made uſe of by Interpreters in this place. Firſt, the grave or death; Secondly, Hell, which is the ſecond death, an everlaſting death *conſumeth thoſe that have ſinned.*

But why doth he ſay, *the grave conſumeth thoſe that have ſinned?* Can he meane any ſpeciall ſort of men by this, foraſmuch as all men have ſinned and ſin dayly?

I anſwer, It is a truth, the grave conſumeth, and death reigneth over all, for that all have ſinned; Whereſoever ſin hath to doe, death hath to doe, the territories of death are as large as the territories of ſin; And had it not been for ſin, death had never had any dominion in the world, nor can the grave conſume any but thoſe who have ſinned. The Body of man had never come into the graves mouth, and it had been too hard a morſell for the ſtomack of the grave to digeſt, had it not been for ſin; For though the body of man in its materials and conſtitution was mortall, that is, was under a poſſibility of dying before he ſinned, yet if ſin had not brought him under the threat of death, God had never ſubjected him under that decree of dying in purſuance of both which the grave now conſumeth (all) thoſe that have ſinned. The grave conſumes Godly men becauſe they have ſinned, & the grave conſumes wicked men becauſe they have ſinned; yet there is a great difference among theſe ſinners who dye, and a greater difference among theſe ſinners when they are dead.

And therefore *Job* ſpeakes here deſtinctively; for though it be a truth that all whether godly or wicked have ſinned, and that the grave conſumeth all, who have ſinned, yet *Job* doth not here intend all men *by Thoſe who have ſinned*, For by them *Job* meanes groſſe preſumptuous and impœnitent ſinners; he meanes it not of

those who sin according to common fraylety, but of those who sin with a high hand obstinately. Such he means, even oppressours, adulterers, murtherers, of whom he spake by name before, these and such as these are the sinners whom he intends, while he saith, *so doth the grave those that have sinned.*

And it be said, *so doth the grave those that* (in this sence) *have not sinned.*

I answer, The Grave is said in a speciall manner to consume those who have thus sinned.

First, Because such sinners doe more subject and lay themselves open to death, by their wicked courses and intemperate living. Such sinners spoyle their bodies and corrupt their blood, they fill themselves with diseases, which bring them early to the Grave.

Secondly, Because God doth often cut the thread of such mens lives when they are strong and healthy, and tumbles them into the graves mouth to be consumed, before they have lived out halfe their dayes.

The words being thus opened, fall under a twofold interpretation.

First, As implying the felicity (such as it is) of wicked men in dying, or the easinesse of their death; as they live in pleasure, so they dye without paine. That's a poynt insisted upon at the 13th verse of the 21th Chapter. *They spend their dayes in wealth, and in a moment* (or with ease) *they goe down to the grave.* And againe (*ver.* 32, 33.) *He shall be brought to the grave, the clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him.* Where *Job* shewes that wicked men have as much ease in death as others, and many times a great deale more. *They dye in a moment,* not tyred out with the torture of chronical diseases, but having a quicke and speedy passage out of the world, are dissolved even as the snow is by the heate and warmth of the Sunne. This sence some of note insist chiefly upon, as most suitable to *Jobs* scope in describing the corporall, and temporall felicity of wicked men, even in death, which carries the greatest appearance of terror and trouble in it.

Moriuntur facillimè & suavissime, ita ut nihil doloris aut cruciatus sentiant, non lenta morte contabescunt ut magna ex parte probi Merc.

Ex hebræis aliqui putant indicari lenissimam mortem impiorum, qua lenitur et insensibilitèr liquifiunt, &c. Pined:

But I rather take these words as a description of the miserable end and sad conclusion of a wicked man. For the word which we render, *to consume,* signifies a forceable swallowing downe, a kind of devouring, which doth not consist with that other explication.

Drought

Drought and heate consume the snow waters, so doth the grave those that have sinned.

Hence observe.

First, *Some sin so as if they were the only sinners, or as if they only had sinned.*

All men sin, but some goe away with the name, as if they onely were worthy to be called sinners. In which sence the Evangelist saith (*Luke* 7. 37.) *And behold a woman in the City which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat in the Pharisees house brought an alabaster box of ointment,* &c. But were not all the women in the City sinners? They were so, but this woman had a common fame for a sinner, that is, for an uncleane, wanton woman; she was a sinner of sinners, the chiefe of sinners in that City, So (*Luk.* 19.7) when Christ went to the house of *Zacheus,* the Pharisees were vexed, and murmered, saying, *that he was gone to be guest with a man which was a sinner*; As if they had said, he is gone to the house of a notorious sinner, a man so sinfull and guilty, that all men seeme innocent and sinlesse in comparison of him. So they accounted *That Zacheus* the Publican, and doubtlesse he was as noted a man for sin before his conversion, as he was for grace after it. As they who are *born of God doe not commit sin, yea, cannot sin because they are born of God* (1 Joh. 3 9) that is, their sinning is no sinning in Gods account, and comparatively to the sinning of others. So they who are borne of the Devill (as Christ saith those contradicting *Jewes* were, *Joh.* 8.44) doe nothing but commit sin, and sin so as if they (and their like) alone did sin, For as no godly man sins as a wicked man doth, so some wicked men sin at such a rate, that it may be said they only sin, even in respect of the generality of wicked men Thus also some godly men do so far exceed and out-strip other Godly men in holynesse and the acting of their graces, as if they only were Godly, as if they only had the acting of those graces. *Abraham* believed as if he only had been a beleever; and *Job* was patient, as if none had patience but he; *David* was a man so upright, as if onely he had been upright, or a man after Gods own heart. There are Saints like *Abraham* and *David,* none like them, and there are sinners, like *Jeroboam* and *Ahab,* none like them.

So

So doth the grave those that have sinned.

Observe.

They who are extreamely sinfull, make themselves sevenfold more subject to death then other men.

They who sin as if none did sin but they, are so subject to death, as if none were subject to death but they. For if every sin, the lest sin doth put us into the hand or under the power of death, then great sins multiplyed and continued in, put us into the hand and under the power of death much more. The Psalmist saith of wicked worldly men (*Psal.*49. 14.) *Like sheepe they are layd in the grave, death shall feed on them, and their beauty shall consume in the grave, from their dwelling* ; or (as we put in the margin) *the grave being an habitation to every one of them shall consume their beauty.*

But some may object, Is not this true of Godly men too, are not they thus handled by death, and the grave? doth not death feed on them? and doth not the grave consume their beauty?

I answer, though it doth, yet it doth not so feed upon, nor consume them, as it feeds upon and consumes wicked men. For the Psalmist speaks here of death as it were triumphing over the wicked, whereas the Godly triumph over death. For, first he saith, The wicked are *layd in the grave like sheep*; They lived like *Wolves or Lyons*, but they are layd in the grave *like sheepe*. If it be asked, why like sheepe? I answer, not for the innocency of their lives, but for their impotency in death; as if it had been said, when once death took them in hand to lay them in the grave, they could make no more resistance then a sheepe can against a Lion or a Wolfe; And when death hath thus laid them in the grave, then secondly (saith the Psalmist) *death shall feed on them*, as a Lyon doth upon a sheepe, or any wild beast upon his prey, which is a further degree of deaths triumph over the wicked; And thirdly, *their beauty shall consume in the grave*, that is, all their bodily and naturall beauty (and that is all the beauty which they have) shall consume in the Grave, whereas the Godly, have a beauty (and they count it their only beauty) which the grave cannot consume, and that is the beauty of their graces, the beauty of holynesse, the spirituall beauty of the inner man, yea and the spirituall beauty

beauty of their outward holy actings shall not consume in the Grave; For *blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, for from henceforth, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labours, and their works follow them* (Rev. 14. 13.) that is, their good workes follow them (not to death but into life) and will be both beauty and blessednesse to them from the Lord for ever. Whereas cursed are the dead that eye in their sins, for from henceforth, they shall be denyed rest for ever, and none of their workes, wherein they took pleasure in this world, shall follow them into the next to give them any pleasure. All their beauty and outward blessedness ends in the grave. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ*, (saith the Apostle, of beleevers, 1 Cor. 15. 19.) *we are of all men most miserable* ; then how miserable are they, who have no hope beyond this life, or if they have, both that, and their present beauty consume together in the grave. Thus it is plaine, that though godly men dye, yet death hath not such a hand over them, as over the wicked. And as wicked men are more under the hand of death then the Godly when they dye, so they are continually more lyable unto death. Sin, which unfits men to dye comfortably, fits them (as it were) to dye naturally: The more sinfull any man is, the sooner may death surprise him. Holinesse hath not only a promise of eternall life hereafter, but of a long life here (*Psal.* 34. 12, 13) And sin is not only under a threat of eternall death hereafter, but of a speedy death here. (*Psal.* 55. 23.) *But thou O Lord shalt bring them* (that is, wicked men) *down into the pit of destruction*, (But when? it may be long first, the next words make answer) *Bloody and deceitfull men shall not live out half their dayes* ; That is, not half the dayes which as others doe so they naturally might live, either the Justice of God or of man shall cut such men off in the midst of their dayes. The grave gapes for those who have thus sinned. So then, though there are many spirituall reasons referring to eternall life, which may move the sons of men to take heed of sin, yet there is a strong motive from the concernments of this present temporal life, and that not only as to the comforts of it, but also as to the very continuance of it. They hasten themselves to the grave who make hast to sin, and so at once endanger the hopes of the next life, and the enjoyment of this.

Pro, sepulchrũ ut cur malim infernus aut inferi, Nam sepulchrum rapit etiam bonos inferi solos eos rapiunt qui peccaverunt i. e. improbos. Drus.

Lastly, Some, because the Grave (in a general sence) consumes the godly as well as the sinner (in the sence last expressed) doe

doe therefore restrain the word *Sheol* in this place to *Hell*, as it signifies the place or state of the damned, which is proper onely to those who have sinned, and dye in their sinnes. So the whole verse is thus rendred. *As dry earth and heate consume the snow waters, so hell consumeth those that have sinned.* All that sin and turne not, shall be turned to hell; But shall hell consume them? they shall ever be consuming, but never consumed. Hell shall consume them as to a comfortable being, but it shall not consume them as to a being; they shall be alwayes dying but never dead. Hell is the portion and all the portion of all wicked men hereafter, what ever portion of worldly profit or pleasure they have had here; hell shall consume them, and they shall be consuming for ever.

Ut terra torrida & calor ab sumunt aquas invales, ita infernus eos qui peccaverunt. Tygur:

The 20th verse may carry the sence of this interpretation, but it complyeth more clearly with the former, describing the calamitous condition of a wicked man at his departure out of this world.

Vers. 20. *The womb shall forget him, the worme shall feed sweetlye on him, he shall be no more remembred, and wickednesse shall be broken as a tree.*

The number varyes here againe, *Job* spake in the plurall number immediately before, yet here keeping to the same subject, he speakes in the singular.

The womb shall forget him.

רחם *a verbo quod intensissimè & tenerrimè amare significat.* That is, They who loved him most tenderly and dearely *shall forget him.* The word which we render *the womb*, is of a verbe which signifies to love, with greatest intensenesse and tendernes: it is applyed to the love of man to God, (*Psal.* 18. 1.) *I love the Lord*, I love the Lord dearly with bowells of affection; and it is often applyed to the love of God unto man. Some translate it here by the Abstract; *Love, mercy, or pitty shall forget him.* Which may be taken two wayes; First, that those friends who before were pitifull to him, should forget him; his lovers, and acquaintance, who were dear to him even as his bowels, they shall forget him; or secondly, *mercy shall forget him*, that is, the mercy of God, or the God of mercy shall forget him, God who is altogether mercy shall forget him; hell shall consume him, and

Vim majorem habet per abstractum. Obliviscetur ejus miseratio, sive amor sive dilectio, i. e. illi qui eum suaviter amabunt. Bold:

mercy, or the mercifull God shall forget him for ever. The vulgar reads it by way of imprecation, *let mercy forget him*; others as a direct denunciation, *mercy shall forget him*; But I rather apprehend that this phrase, or manner of speaking, *The wombe shall forget him*, doth only import thus much; That when the wicked man dyeth, he shall be as much forgotten among men, as if such a man had never come out of his mothers wombe, nor been born into the world. But are not wicked men remembred to have been in the world when once they goe out of the world? usually they doe such things in the world as cannot easily be forgotten; And are not many wicked men, who dyed some thousands of yeares agoe, remembred unto this day, as if they had dyed but yesterday? I answer, As to forget, alwayes implyeth former knowledge, and acquaintance, so sometimes it implyeth onely present neglect. When we passe by, or slight a man, then we are said to forget him, though we not only remember who he is, but see him before our eyes. Much more then may we be said to forget those men being dead, whom we slighted while they lived, and never speake of but with contempt and abhorrence both of their persons and actions since they dyed. *The wombe shall forget him.*

Yet as the former verse is expounded by some, (as was there touched) to shew how quiet and easie a passage wicked men usually have out of this world by death, so this clause also of the verse in hand, yea the whole verse is expounded to the same sence; I will onely hint it, and passe on.

The wombe shall forgets him.

That is, his mother shall not be troubled or grieved at his death, because he dyed without griefe or trouble.

The wormes shall feed sweetly on him.

That is, The grave shall be no severer to him then to others. There the wormes feed upon all men, and they shall feed sweetly on him; or it shall be a kind of sweetnesse and pleasure to him, to have the wormes feeding on him; which is no more then what *Job* said upon the same argument (*Chap.* 21. 33.) *The clods of the valley shall be sweet to him.*

Ita suaviter obdormit, ut in sepulchro ei vermis dulcescere videatur. Drus.

He shall be no more remembred.

That is, there shall no hard fate or evill accident befall him

when he dyes to administer matter of discourse concerning him: for when a man is cut off by some remarkable stroak of Judgment either from the hand of God or man, his death becomes the discourse and Table talke of all sorts of men, for that generation at least, if not for many more. What hath caused *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, to be remembred to this day, was it not the strangenes of their death? (*Numb.* 14. 29, 30) *And Moses said, If these men dye the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up*, &c. This dreadful hand of God upon them in swallowing them up alive, hath made them to be remembred more then many thousands of honest and good men in *Israel*, who dyed in their beds. Upon this account *Ananias* and *Saphira* are remembred, and so is *That Herod* (Act. 12. 23.) *Who was eaten of wormes and gave up the Ghost, because he gave not glory unto God.* But saith *Job* (according to this exposition) the wicked mans death is commonly so fayre, & so much after the common death of all men, that no man remembers him any more.

And wickednesse shall be broken as a tree.

That is, the wicked man shall dye like an old rotten tree, he shall moulder away and decay by piece-meale, or gradually, as a tree doth which is never hewen downe, but is suffered to waste and dye alone. Thus the interpretation is carried through the whole verse, as a proofe, that bad men may (in this kinde) have a good death.

But though this be a truth, and suites well with *Jobs* scope in some passages of this Chapter, as also in other passages of this booke, that wicked men dye as to outward appearance as fairely, and sweetly, as the godly, so that as no man *knoweth love, or hatred by all that is before him, but all things* (in this life) *come alike to all*; *There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked* (Eccl: 9. 1, 2.) So all things come alike to all in death, so far as it meerely concernes the separation of soule and body; yet I rather conceive that this verse declares wrath and judgment to wicked men dying, or their misery and wretchednesse in death. And therefore first, *the wombe*, that is, his neereft relations, and friends, even his mother, and wife, *shall forget him.* They expected no good from him

him while he lived, & so it was little sorrow to them when he dyed. Some men live til their friends are weary of them, & every one thinks the world is well rid of them when they dye. Secondly, *The worme shall feed sweetly on him*, that is, as he fed sweetly upon sin before, so now the worme shall have a sweete morsell of him; Which some interpret also as a circumlocution of an ignominious or at least a vulgar buryal; as if he had said, he shall not have the buryal of the noble and honourable, who usually are secured from wormes by spices and imbalmings (spice and perfume fence the dead body against the worme) But though he lived honourably, death shall overtake him, and he shall be buryed ignominiously, or he shall be buryed among common men, he shall not have that priviledge which appertaines to his state, preservation from the wormes, And (which is a greater misery then both the former) Thirdly, *He shall be no more remembred*, that is, he shall be no more spoken of with honour, but his name shall rot, as a man that is not worth the remembring. His name shall not be registerd with honour, nor kept upon the file, with men of credit and renowne. So that as the first part of the verse shewes how his neereft relations and lovers shall forget him, so this latter part shewes that *he shall be remembred no more* of any others.

Mater quia a vivo nihil expectabat solatij, neq. pro mortuo amplius angitur.

The Original word which we translate to *remember*, taken in other formes, signifies a history, or a monument of record, as also a recorder or register, who writes and sets down things for memory. And hence also a man-childe in the Hebrew is called *Zachar*, because the family is reckoned by the males, they only being named in genallogyes, and registred in the monuments of antiquity: so that these words, *He shall be no more remembred*, found thus much, he shall be a man whose name is quite blotted or rased out of all memorialls And This curse of being *no more remembred*, may be taken as was intimated before, either first absolutely, he shall not be thought of, named, or remembred at all, or secondly, relatively, he shall no more be remembred with honour, his name will smell worse then his rotten carkasse when he is dead, and whensoever he is mentioned, it will be like rakeing in a dunghill which raiseth up a filthy stench and vapour. Possibly while he lived he was spoken of with honour, he had many flatterers, who crept to him, bowed to him, adored him, and called him a gracious Lord, but when he dyeth his reputation dyeth too, he shall be no

Meshciim secretarij zichronoth, memoria historiæ, monumenta, zachar, Masculus.

no more remembred with honour; *when any man ceaſeth to be remembred as he once was, he may be ſaid not to be remembred at all.* The worſt and wickedeſt men that ever were in the world may be ſtill remembred, but when they are remembred it is with ſome marke of infamie, or with a blacke brand upon their name.

Hence note.

Not to be remembred at all when we are dead, or to be remembred with diſhonour, is the portion of the wicked:

Many precious Saints have both lived in obſcurity and being dead 'tis ſcarce remembred that they ever lived, but none of the knowne Saints did ever live in diſgrace (unleſſe in their opinion who had no grace) and being dead they are remembred by all (who have grace) with honour. But They who have been moſt famous for wickedneſſe while they lived in this world, the moſt famous oppreſſours, adulterers, and robbers, have dyed undeſired, and their *name hath rotted* being dead (*Prov.* 10 7.) *David* (*Pſal.* 69. 28.) powreth out this curſe upon his enemies, *Let them be blotted out of the Booke of the living, and not remembred among the righteous.* The *Jewes* were wont to number their familyes, and to take their names; ſo they did when they came out of *Egypt.* In which ſence the booke of numbers may be called, *The booke of the living*; and we may take the booke of the living in a double notion, eyther firſt for the booke of thoſe who lived naturally, or ſecondly, of thoſe who lived ſpiritually, and ſo were ſuch as ſhould live eternally (*Phil.* 4 3. *Rev* 3. 5.) *David* ſeemes to intend this book of the living, becauſe he addeth, *let them not be remembred among the righteous.* As if he had ſaid, Theſe men made an outward profeſſion and ſeemed once to be in the liſt and catalogue of the righteous, they had once an eſteeme and a name among the people of God (as all hypocrites have till they are unmasked) but they have diſcovered themſelves to be of another alliance, therefore let them be no more named nor remembred as having any relation to that ſociety. Thus we may interpret that imprecation of *Moſes* (*Exod.* 32. 32.) when the Lords wrath waxed hot againſt the people of *Iſrael*, and would have deſtroyed them, *Moſes* prayed, *Yet now if thou wilt forgive their ſin, and if not, blot me I pray thee out of the booke which thou haſt written*, that is, out of the booke which thou haſt commanded to be written as a re-

a record of the people of *Iſrael*; As if he had ſaid, let me be reckoned no more for an *Iſraelite*, eſpecially let me not have a glorious, honourable name in *Iſrael* (ſuch a one *Moſes* had being the leader of that people) *Blot me out of the booke which thou haſt written*, let not my name ſtand upon that record. The Lord had ſaid (*ver.* 20.) *Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot againſt them, that I may conſume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moſes beſought the Lord*, &c. As if he had ſaid, I ſtand not upon my own name, I am ſo far from being ambitiouſſ, deſirous to be the head of a greater nation then theſe, that rather then thy name ſhould ſuffer, I care not to be taken notice of as the head of this nation, no nor as the meaneſt member of them, no nor to be accounted ſo much as a common *Iſraelite*. *Blot me out of the booke which thou haſt written.* This alſo is a faire interpretation of *Pauls* meaning (*Rom.* 9 3) when he wiſhed *himſelfe accurſed from Chriſt for his Brethren, his kinſmen according to the fleſh.* We may ſuppoſe that *Moſes* and *Paul* were moved with the ſame Spirit of zeale for the Glory of God in both their wiſhes; And that when *Moſes* wiſhed (upon that account) to be blotted out of the Booke which God had written, he wiſhed the ſame thing which *Paul* did, when he wiſhed to be accurſed or an anathema from Chriſt; That is, to be as a perſon ſeperated or excommunicated from the ſociety or communion of the faithfull, and ſo no more to be remembred among the Saints, or to have his name blotted out of the Church records, though he had been ſo great a planter and propagater of the Churches. There are two Scriptures that ſpeake of ſuch writings or holy records (*Iſa.* 4. 3.) *It ſhall then come to paſſe, that he that is left in Sion, and he that remaines in Jeruſalem ſhall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living* (or to life) *in Jeruſalem.* Many might live in *Jeruſalem*, who were not written among the living, or to life in *Jeruſalem.* Thus to be written *to life*, or among the living, is to be written in the Catalogue of thoſe who are reckoned to have a life of Grace holyneſſe, and ſanctification here, as alſo to be heyres and expectants of a life of Glory hereafter. Againe we have a like evidence of this (*Ezek.* 13. 9.) *My hand ſhall be upon the Prophets that ſee vanity, and that divine lies, they ſhall not be in the aſſembly of my people, neither ſhall they be written in the writing of the houſe of Iſrael.* As when the Lord brought the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*,

Voluit Moſes de libro legis deleri nomen ſuum ne unquã ulla in ea plus men io fieret, nec legiſlator haberetur vel dux populi. Rab. Sol.

Ex pungi ſe vo luit ex catalogo quaſi ſcriptorũ patrum, i. e. principum virorum populi Hebræi, ſc. patriarcharum, &c. qui vocabatur Liber Juſtorum. Bold.

Ab ipſo populi dei catalogo radi poſtulabat, ut nulla deinceps inter fidelium nominis ſui mẽtio fieret, quamvis fidiſſimus dei ſervus eſſe perſeveret. Hæc deletio nominis a libro viventium populi dei opprobioſa nimis erat & infamis ſi elevatorum pœna. Id.

Ægypt, he commanded them to be muſtered or numbred (*Num.* 1, 2, 3.) Thus alſo when they returned from the Babylonian Captivity, they were numbred againe (*Ezr.* Chap. 2 *Neh.* Chap. 7.) Now thoſe records in which their names were written, are conceived to be *the writings of the houſe of Iſrael*, mentioned in this 13th of *Ezekiel*, as alſo, *the Book of the living or to life*, in the fourth of *Iſaiah*, at leaſt that both theſe Scripturs allude to thoſe records. And it was the cuſtome of the *Jewes*, that when any of them acted wickedly, his name was raſed out of thoſe records as unworthy to be remembred among the people of God, and was looked upon as a dead man, yea as a damned man, who hath no name in the booke of life ſo often mentioned in Scripture, or whoſe name might be ſaid to be blotted out of it.

From all which it appeares how great a curſe it is to be no more remembred, with reſpect and honour, which *Job* affirmes ſhall be the condition of wicked men. Which he further confirmes in the laſt clauſe of the verſe.

And wickedneſſe ſhall be broken as a tree.

Here the abſtract (as elſewhere frequently in Scripture) is put for the concrete, That man who obſtinately perſeveres in ſin, is not only wicked, but wickedneſſe it ſelfe. (*Pſal.* 107. 42.) *All iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth*, that is, ſuch men as are full of iniquity, ſhall have nothing to ſay or object againſt the righteous dealings of God, but ſhall be ſilent in darkenes. So (*Job* 35. 13.) men extreamely vaine are called *vanity*, and we uſually call crafty men craft, covetous men covetouſneſſe, and proud men are called pride; So a man much given to peace, is in Scripture-language called peace, (*Pſal.* 120 7.) *I am peace*, or *I peace, but they make themſelves ready for warre*. They who are much carryed to or in any thing, are ſometimes called by the name of that thing, or they take the name of it upon themſelves. Thus *David* ſpake (*Pſ.* 109. 4.) *For my love they are my adverſaries, but I give my ſelfe to prayer*; The Hebrew is. *I prayer*. *David* was ſo much ſet upon prayer, that he was prayer it ſelfe; and a wicked man is ſo ſet upon wickedneſſe, that he is wickedneſſe it ſelfe.

Wickedneſſe ſhall be broken as a tree.

What tree? The Text determines not, but ſpeakes indefinitely, as

a tree. We may underſtand it firſt of a barren tree; barren trees are broken, and cut downe. The word *broken*, imports violence, and ſo *a violent breaking*; wicked men ſhall be broken violently. Chriſt ſaith of the Barren tree (*Luk.* 13 8.) *Cut it down, why comberth it the ground*. Fruitfull trees adorne and beautifie the ground, but barren trees doe only burden and comber it. *As good not to be as to be good for nothing*. The wicked ſhall be cut downe and broken as a barren tree; ſecondly (which provokes more to breaking) *they ſhall be broken as a tree that bringeth forth diſtaſtfull, biſter, poyſonous fruit*; It is not good to let a tree live, which brings forth evill and deadly fruit. If they deſerve to be broken who bring forth no fruit, then much more they who bring forth none but noughty fruit. Now as the wicked are alwayes barren of good fruit, ſo they are alwayes bearing evill fruit, nor can they beare any other, *Doe men gather grapes of thornes?* Thirdly, they ſhall be broken as a tree that is rent and ſhivered both body and boughes with a tempeſt, or ſtorme of thunder and lightening; Thus many tall and goodly trees are broken, and thus the wicked ſhall be broken, a ſtorme, a tempeſt from heaven ſhall breake them. The downfall and deſtruction of wicked men hath been inſiſted upon from other paſſages of this booke, and therefore I forbeare to adde any thing further here.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 24. Verſ. 21,22,23.

He evill intreateth the barren that beareth not, and doeth not good to the widdow.
He draweth alſo the mighty with his power, he riſeth up and no man is ſure of his life.
Though it be given him to be in ſafety, whereon he reſteth, yet his eyes are upon their wayes.

JOB having ſhewed the miſerable concluſion of wicked men, begins afreſh to deſcribe their further progreſs in wickedneſſe in the 21 and 22 verſes.

Verſ. 21. *He evill intreateth the barren.*

Here's another part of his wickedneſs, having robbed and murthered the innocent, having committed adultery, where he could have opportunity and admittance, he proceeds, *to afflict the barren*, and *vex the widdow*. The word which we render to *evill entreat*, hath ſeverall ſignifications, and I find Interpreters accordingly varying about the ſence of the whole verſe.

Nos putamus explicari non quid improbus faciat ſed quibus ſupplicijs deus ipſorum poſteros, etſi ad tempus ſtare videantur deijciat. Merl.

Conſociat (ſc: deus) ei ſterile non parituram, & viduam non afficit bono. Jun

Neq; vivo ei neq; mortuo uxori benedicit, Jun:

Tollit (deus ſc:) è medio liberos ejus, vel opibus poteſtare & honore florentiſſimos. Jun:

Firſt, The word ſignifies to *aſſociate, or joyne together*. Thus Mr *Broughton* (to whom others joyne) renders it, *he adjoyneth the barren which hath not borne childe*: whereas our tranſlation holds out the further actings of wicked men in ſin, this ſhews the further progreſſe of God in puniſhing them for ſin; For the relative *he*, in the text, is not referr'd to the wicked man, but to God himſelfe, *hee*, that is, God *joyneth the barren that hath not borne childe (or that ſhall not beare) and he doth no good to his widdow*; that is, God ſendeth him a barren wife and when he dyes his widdow ſhall live in miſery. This gloſſe Maſter *Broughton* gives upon his own tranſlation; *God ſendeth after him a barren wife, that he ſhould have no helpe by Children, and ſheweth no pity to his widdow.* The next verſe is alſo tranſlated in this ſence; *He draweth the mighty after him*, that is, God drawes his children though they are mighty into the ſame Condition with him, and if any of them hold out a while, yet they ſhall be ſure to fall at laſt. The Original may beare

beare this ſence, and the Context or Antecedents ſuite well with it; but yet I ſhall rather keepe to our own tranſlasion then fall into this channell of interpretation, which changes both the perſon and the ſtate of the text: we rendring it of the actings of the wicked man in reference unto others, and theſe rendering it as the actings of God in reference to the wicked. The reaſon of this difference is, as the gramarians ſpeake, becauſe the nominative caſe is not here ſet downe (and according to the Conciſeneſſe of the Hebrew tongue it is uſuall to leave it out) the verbe only being expreſſed, whence ſome referre it to man, others to God.

רעה *pavit tam ſe quam alios; etiam depaſtus fuit perdidit deſtruxit.*

Secondly, As the word ſignifies to aſſociate, or joyne together; So, to feed, nouriſh, and take care of, as a ſhepheard feedeth his flock, or a father his children and houſhold: this ſuites well with the former ſignification, becauſe they that are joyned together and aſſociated, doe uſually feed together. (Prov. 28. 7.) *Whoſoever keepeth the Law is a wiſe ſon, but he that is a Companion of riotous men* (we put in the margin, *he that feedeth gluttons*) *ſhameth his father.* According to this ſence of the word the Interpretation is given thus; *he feedeth the barren that beareth not, and doeth not good to the widow*; That is, he runs after harlots, and feedeth them; ſuch lewd women are expreſſed *by the barren*, becauſe ſuch ſeldome bring forth Children, nor doe they deſire it, being ſo intent upon the fullfilling of their wanton or covetous luſts, that they quite forget the ends of marriage. Thus the Prodigal ſonne lived after he was gone from his Father, as his Elder brother gave the character of his ſinfull courſe of life, which his father (upon his returne and humiliation) had covered and forgiven (*Luk.* 15. 30.) *As ſoon as this thy ſonne was come, which had devoured thy living with harlots*, &c. They who feed and keepe ſuch barren ones, ſhall be kept bare and feed barely enough themſelves, if they be not quite devoured.

Pavit ſterilem quæ non parit. Vulg:

Alit ſterilia ſcorta, non prolis ſed obſcenæ voluptatis gratiæ.

Thirdly, The word ſignifies as the care of the ſhepheard in feeding his flock, or the care of a father in feeding his houſhold, ſo it ſignifies to feed upon, to eate up and devour: and then the ſence is; *he eateth up, or he devoureth the barren*; which rendring falls in with ours, *he evill entreateth the barren*; he that devoures and eates them up, *evill entreates them.* To which ſence alſo the word is tranſlated *to breake or to ſpoyle*, (*Jer.* 11. 16. *Pſal.* 2 9) *He ſhall breake them with a rod of Iron.* Thus he eateth up or he

he evill entreateth, that is, he vexeth or oppresseth

The barren that beareth not.

The barren, in strictnes of signification, are they that have not received the blessing of fruitfulnesse in Child-bearing; and this phrase, *the barren that beareth not*, implyes a woman that never bare children. Such a one was *Hannah* in a proper sence (1 *Sam.* 1. 5, 6.) and in a spirituall or mysticall sence, such were the Gentiles for a long time, whom the Prophet thus encourageth (*Isa* 54. 1) *Sing O Barren, thou that didst not beare*; that is, Rejoyce O ye Gentiles, who as yet have brought forth no fruit to God The church of the *Jewes* was fruitfull, she brought forth, but the Gentiles were barren; yet at last the Gentiles were brought forth into a Church, and then they brought forth aboundantly, both in reference to holy actions, and holy persons; for as the Apostle applyeth that prophecy (*Gal.* 4. 27.) *The desolate hath many moe children then she that hath a husband.* Barrennes is an affliction, yea it was a reproach; and therefore that good woman *Hannah* when God heard her prayer and gave her a child, said, *God hath taken away my reproach.*

Afflixit sterilem ne pareret. Bez. *Confregit uxorem sterilem ne pareret.* Pagn. *Hic est improbus ille, qui uxorem propriam quia sterilis est malis affixit.* Merl.

Some render the Text as if it were the designe of the wicked man to afflict the barren, though his own wife, lest she should beare him children; others as if this were his wickednesse, he afflicted and vexed his wife because she was barren, whereas such women ought rather to be comforted by their husbands. As good *Elkanah* did his wife *Hannah* when grieved because of her owne barrennes (1 *Sam.* 1. 8.) *Why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee then ten sons?* It is inhumanity in any, especially in a husband to afflict the barren, much more to afflict them because barren.

Hence note.

To upbraid any with their afflictions, especially with their naturall infirmities, such as barrennesse or any bodily defect, is very sinfull.

God giveth liberally and upbraideth not (Jam. 1. 5.) and shall we upbrayd any because God denyes them his gifts? This was *Peninahs* sin in the present case (1 *Sam.* 1. 6.) and it will be a sin to any to doe so in any other case.

Againe,

Againe, I conceive we may take the word *barren* here, not only strictly for one that beareth not, but largely for any one that is in a sad or afflicted condition, as the words *widdow* and *fatherles* are often used in Scripture, not onely for such as have no father, or have lost their husband, but for any that are in a troubled or low estate. So because barrennes was then a state of affliction and of reproach, therefore by the barren any affliction may be meant; And so *Evilly to Intreate the Barren*, is to vex or oppress any that are afflicted.

Hence note.

To afflict the afflicted, is the worke of the wicked.

Sterilis per se satis afflicta est, ergo dum contemnit eam, afflictæ afflictionem addit. Drus.

Not to support the afflicted is sinfull, how sinfull then is it to adde to their affliction, and encrease their burden? I only mention this, having discovered this straine of wickednesse heretofore, and what this former part of the verse saith affirmatively, is said negatively in the latter.

And he doth not good to the widdow.

Eliphaz (Chap. 22. 9.) charged *Job* with this wickednes that he had sent widdowes away empty, that is, that he had not done good to the widdow; and *Job* at the third verse of this Chapter numbers it among the evill deeds of the wicked man, that he had taken *the widdowes Oxe for a pledge.* In this verse he againe reckons up the same piece of the wicked mans uncharitablenes, *he doth not good to the widdow*; That is, he administers no help to the widdow in her wants, no counsell to her in her straites, nor any comfort to her in her sorrows. And this negative, he doth not good to the widdow, hath an affirmative in it, he doth her wrong, he grieveth and vexeth the widow. For as negative commandements alwayes containe the Affirmative (while we are forbidden to do any evill, we are enjoyned to doe the contrary good) so negative practices usually imply the affirmative, and while we neglect to doe good, we are active in doing evill. Or as the negative threatnings of God containe affirmatives (*Exod.* 20. 7.) *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine, for the Lord will not hold him guiltles that taketh his name in vaine*: that is, he will hold him very guilty, or look upon him as very sinfull, and punish him accordingly that takes his name in vaine; and as Negative

promiſes containe affirmative promiſes (*Pſal.* 51.17.) *The ſacrifices of God are a broken ſpirit, a broken and a contrite heart O God thou wilt not deſpiſe*, that is, thou O God wilt highly eſteem, accept of, and delight in a broken heart; and as negative concluſions imply the affirmative (*Prov.* 17.21.) *The father of a fool hath no joy*; that is, he hath much ſorrow and grief (*Prov.* 28, 21.) *To accept perſons in Judgment is not good*; that is to accept perſons in Judgement is very bad; ſo negative practices of ſin containe the affirmative, as elſewhere ſo here in the Text, *he doth not good to the widow*, that is, he wrongeth and troubleth the widow, the widdow who is helpleſſe, is hurt by him.

לא אלם אלמנה *quod ſignificat colligare & ob nutescere.*

The word which we render *widow*, ſignifies in the verbe both to *binde*, and to be *ſilent*; Both which ſignifications are compliCated in the widows Condition. For firſt the widow is bound, though ſhe be looſe from her husband, ſhe is bound, and that two wayes; firſt, with troubles, that's her affliction; ſecondly, ſhe is bound to be or ſtay much at home, that's her duty; ſecondly, as the widow is home-bound, ſo ſhe is tongue-bound too; the widows eloquence is ſilence, ſhe ſpeaks moſt to her owne commendation when ſhe ſpeakes little. The Apoſtle *Paul* reproves widows about two things, which diſcover two faylings in them, oppoſite to both theſe latter bindings (1 *Tim.* 5.13.) *And withal they learne to be idle, wandring from houſe to houſe*, As if he had ſaid, it is not comely for the widow to wander abroad, ſhe ſhould ſtay at home; the widow ſhould be a fixed ſtarre, not a plannet, Not that the widow is to be a priſoner in her houſe, but ſhe ſhould be ſo much there, that ſhe may deſerve the name of a houſe keeper, not of a wanderer from houſe to houſe. The Apoſtle proceeds in his charge againſt the faulty widow, *And not only idle, but* (which is the ſecond vice) *Tattlers alſo and buſie bodyes, ſpeaking things which they ought not*; Tattlers are ſuch as uſe their tongues overmuch, and uſually much more then their hands; whereas the widow ſhould be much in buſineſſe, little in diſcourſe, alwayes doing, ſeldome ſpeaking. We ſee the wiſdom of God in teaching proper duties in common names, in which thing the Hebrew language is moſt exact & fruitful. But I ſhal return from this digreſſion (if it may be ſo called) about the word, when I have onely added, that the ſence given from this Etymologie of the word, doth not onely ſhew the widow much of her duty, but aggravates

vates the ſin of the wicked man in the neglect or omiſſion of his duty unto her, *He doth not good to the widow*, no not to the widow, who is bound down with many ſorrowes; he ſpeakes not a good word for the widow, who is as *David* ſpeakes in another caſe (*Phil.* 39. 2.) *even dumbe with ſilence*. I have already both in this Chapter as alſo in the 22d ſhewed how ſinfull it is either to neglect or afflict widows, yea that to neglect them is to afflict them; therefore I ſhall not proſecute thoſe poynts here. Onely from the forme of ſpeaking.

Note.

Not to doe good is ſinfull as well as to doe evill, yea as ſinfull as to doe evill.

Not to doe what we are enjoyned, is as bad as to doe what we are forbidden. We are not only forbidden to wrong the widow (*Jer.* 22.3.) but we are often enjoyned to relieve and help her, to viſit her and doe her good; therefore the widow hath wrong done to her, when good is not done to her.

The ſpirit of wickedneſſe is not yet drawne to the full length, ſee the wicked man ſtill at worke in the next verſe.

Verſ. 22. *He draweth alſo the mighty by his power, he riſeth up and no man is ſure of his life.*

In the former verſe the wicked man had to doe with the weak, with the barren, with the widow, but now he grapples with the ſtrong & mighty; *He draweth alſo the mighty*. The word may denote a twofold drawing Firſt, drawing by a ſecret hidden & imperceptible power; a moral power, the power of perſwaſion working upon the heart and influencing the affections. There is an internal atractive vertue, weh draweth the mind as the loadſtone doth iron, when nothing is ſeen, nor ſo much as a word heard. The word is uſed in that ſence (*Judg.* 4 6,7.) where (the people of *Iſrael here*. Druſ being ſore oppreſſed by *Jabins* Army under the conduct of *Siſera*) *Deborah* the Propheteſſe, who at that time Judged *Iſrael*, ſent and called *Barach* and ſaid unto him, *Hath not the Lord God of Iſrael Commanded, ſaying; goe and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thouſand men of the Children of Naphtali, and of the Children of Zebulon*. Thus God bid them draw to that place.

משך traxit per traxit, occulto impetu aliquem impellere quo velis, verbis atq; ratione, aut aliquē trahere.

But

But what hath God promised? *Deborah* tells him what in the next verse; *And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon, Sisera the Captaine of Jabins Army with his chariots, and his multitude; and will deliver him into thine hand.* But it may be questioned how God would draw *Sisera* with his Army thither? It was not by any outward force, only God put a purpose into his heart to draw up his Army to that place, that so he might fall into the snare, *Sisera* had a secret motion or impulse upon his spirit, which he could not withstand, though he fell by obeying it. Thus also God draweth fouls to himself, by the invisible power of his Spirit, in their effectuall vocation and conversion (*Joh.* 6. 44.) *No man can come to me except the father which sent me draw him*: how doth God draw he drawes by perswasion, not by compulsion; his perswasion carryes a mighty commanding power with it: This drawing is not a bare morall perswasion, by the proposall of an object before them, and so leaving the sinner purely to his own election, but it is a perswasion which hath an overcoming power going along with it; God doth not draw us against our wills to Christ, but he drawes the will to Christ, or makes us willing to come to Christ. And the Lord drawes beleevers thus also after conversion to neerer converse with Christ. The church begged the putting forth of this powerfull drawing (*Cant.* 1. 3.) *Draw me and I will run after thee.* As the soule must have a drawing before we can come to Christ at all, so after we are come to Christ, we need drawing still, that we may follow hard after him. This sence of the word may have place in the present text. Wicked men have a power of drawing others after them, though they doe not act any outward power. *He draweth the mighty by his power*; That is, he allureth them to his side, or to a compliance with him; And he doth this somtimes as without any formal threatnings to exercise his power against them, so without any formall promises of using his power for them; As they usually draw the mighty by the power of perswasion, so their power and example draw much without perswasion.

Secondly, There is a drawing by an outward violence, or a drawing by force. And this I take to be most proper here; He causeth the mighty to come in and stoope to his power, though they have no mind at all to it.

He

He draweth the mighty.

That is, first, those that are mighty in courage; secondly, those that are mighty in strength, whether of body or estate (*Psal.* 76. 5.) *The stout hearted or mighty are spoiled, they have slept their sleepe*; he drawes the mighty, the stout hearted by his power. אביר *est in* 1 *numero*, 2 *motu*, 3 *potentia.*

There is a twofold power, first, of naturall strength or activity; secondly, there is a power of civill strength or authority (*Rom.* 13. 1.) *The powers that be, are ordained of God*; That is, the Authoritative or Magistraticall powers are ordained of God. We may suppose the wicked man here spoken of cloathed with both these sorts of power, and so as he tramples upon the poor, the widow, the barren, and the weake, so he keepes down the mighty, the rich, the Great, and in conclusion he so tyrannizeth and domineereth over all, that all are over awed, to connive at him, and stand as Neuters, if not to joyne with him, and be of his party. *He draweth the mighty by his power.*

Hence observe

Oppressors and Tyrants will reach men of all degrees and qualities.

When wicked men have undone the poore, they will engage the mighty; when they have done with the barren, and with the widow, they will have to doe with the most numerous and potent familyes. Their oppression of the poor doth not satisfie, but when their appetites, it doth not Extinguish but only encrease their desires of attempting greater persons and things. As godly men proceed from lesser acts of holiness to greater, from lower acts of faith to higher, They goe from faith to faith, and from strength to strength, their path is like the morning light shining more and more unto the perfect day; so the wicked go on from lesser acts of wickednesse to greater, from lust to lust, from sin to sin, their path is like the evening darkness, which darkneth more and more unto the perfect night. As *God addeth iniquity to their iniquity* (*Psal.* 69 27.) by way of punishment, so they adde iniquity to their own iniquity in a way of pleasure, and care not to come into his righteousnesse.

Secondly, Observe.

The

The rule by which wicked men act is their power.

They act according to their ſtrength, rather then according to righteouſneſſe or reaſon, they will doe what they can, not what they ought; might ſerves their turn inſtead of right, and they thinke any thing is done well enough, which they have power enough to doe. Thus the Prophet *Micah* deſcribes the oppreſſors of that age, (*Chap.*2.1.) *They worke evill* (in their thoughts) *upon their beds, when the morning is light, they practiſe it, becauſe it is in the power of their hand.* So ſaith the preſent Text, *They draw the mighty by their power.*

Fourthly, See here the powerfull man working upon the mighty man (*He drawes the mighty by his power.*)

Hence note.

Mighty men may not only meete with their matches, but be overmatched.

Mighty men think themſelves ſafe, or out of danger, and while the poore are under oppreſſion (poſſibly) they ſmile at their own indemnity, and applaud their own happineſſe; yet it may ſoone come to the turne of the mighty to be overturned by might, their power may quickly be overpowred; as the might of God doth alwayes overmatch the might of man (*Luk.* 1. 56) *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeate*; ſo he often armes men, ſometimes the worſt of men, to pull downe *the mighty from their ſeates.* The power of God is above all power, he is higher then the higheſt. And ſome men get ſo high, that they are higher then all others who (beſides themſelves) are higheſt among the children of men. The mighty may meet with their match, and be overmatched. *He draweth the mighty by his power,*

He riſeth up, and no man is ſure of his life.

יקום *a radice* קום *ſurrexit ad ſtandum.*

These words are a cleare deſcription of the oppreſſor, *He riſeth up*; the word ſignifieth, firſt, onely to ſtand, or ſo to riſe as to ſtand, which is common to all men in nature. Secondly, *To riſe up*, is to get higher, to advance a mans ſelfe to further degrees of honour and power; thirdly, it ſignifies to riſe in a hoſtile manner, to riſe as an enemy againſt another (*Pſal.*18.39) *Thou haſt girded me with ſtrength unto the battell; thou haſt ſubdued under me, thoſe that riſe up againſt me.* And againe (*Pſal.* 44.5.) *Through thee will we puſh down our enemies, through thy name will*

will we tread them under that riſe up againſt us. The wicked oppreſſor, in the text, *riſeth up* in all theſe ſences: He riſeth up to ſtand, or to ſettle and eſtabliſh himſelfe, to take good footing, and lay a good foundation for the perpetuating of his greatneſſe. ſecondly, he riſeth up to higher honour; thirdly, having thus ſetled and advanced himſelfe, he riſeth up as an enemy to vexe all thoſe who oppoſe him or ſtand in his way; fourthly, ſome give another ſence of this action; *He*

riſeth up or ſtandeth.

What to doe? even to make faire promiſes, and to enter engagements what good he will do, and how good he will be, when as he intends all theſe things to be but ſnares to catch others, not at all to be as bonds to ty himſelfe, which ſuites and falls in fully with the laſt words of the verſe; *and*

no man is ſure of his life.

The Hebrew is plurall, *No man is ſure of his lives* As if he had ſaid, if a man had an hundred lives he could be ſure of none of them, or he could not be ſure of one of them, when this man riſeth up. The forme of ſpeaking here uſed; *No man is ſure of his life*, or, ſtrictly to the letter of the Hebrew, *No man can truſt or beleeve for his life*, imports a man brought into ſuch a dangerous and uncertaine condition, that he hath no hold (as it were) of his own life, nor doth he ſee any reaſon to beleeve, that he can hold it long, every thing about him carrying the face, and denouncing threats of death. So that it may be ſaid of a man in that eſtate, as *Paul* ſaid of himſelfe (2 *Cor.*1.9) *I received the ſentence of death in my ſelfe*; he that is not ſure of his life, hath upon the matter a ſentence of death in him. *Moſes* deſcribeth ſuch a ſtate, (*Deut.*28.66.) *Thy life ſhall hang in doubt before thee, and thou ſhalt fear day and night, and thou ſhalt have no aſſurance of thy life*; As if he had ſaid, thou ſhalt not be able to call thy life thine own, nor to ſay in whoſe keeping it will be an houre hence; It ſhall hang before thee as a thing which two are contending and ſtriving for, and no man can determine who is like to be maſter of it. The life of man doth or ought alwayes to hang in doubt before him, and he can have no aſſurance of it, whether we reſpect the common fraylety of nature, which concernes every man, or the ſpeciall purpoſe or appoyntment of God

Non fidere vitæ eſt ambigere de vitæ ſpe abjecta omnibus circumſtantijs mortem denunciantibus.

which concernes him. But there are some men whose lives hang in doubt before them, and they have no assurance of their lives, because of outward reall dangers, or at least because of their jealousie and suspition of those dangers which they fancy to themselves. *He riseth up, and no man is sure of his life.* These two parts of the verse being thus laid together, The whole may be expounded.

First, Of another man rising up, and the wicked man fearing his life, *if any man riseth up, he is not sure of his life*; that is, if a man oppose and set himselfe against this tyrannous oppressor, *he* (namely, the tyrant, or the oppressor) will not be in any surety of his life. For, As tyrants are very Cruell, so they are very fearefull, and when they see themselves oppos'd, their feares are encreased. They feare all men, of whom all men are afraid.

Tam timidus est vecors est tyrannus quam sævus & crudelis; si enim justitiam audeat retulere, statum de vita sua & incolumitate deperat. Simplicissimus est sensus ut ad tyranni pavi dicatur, et de illius conscientia animi & mens quem male conscientiæ effici. Cum sit ere it non credit vitæ suæ. Mercer.

Secondly, Others expound it as an expression of the wicked mans secret feare, even when no man opposeth or pursueth him. And thus he is afraid in the strength of his state, or when 'tis best with him. When he riseth up in greatest power and glory, *he is not sure of his life*; that is, he is afraid of his life; his evill Conscience troubles him, and darts in continuall feares upon his soul: He feareth falling as soone as risen up, and death when he is (as to humane provision and appearance) safest and furthest from danger. The marginall reading of our English Bibles gives this sence of the text; *He trusteth not his own life*; that is, He doth not truft that his own life is safe; He doubts his neerest friends will be his enemies, and that they who are of his blood seek his blood, and are ready to ruine him, he hath evill thoughts of others, and he thinkes the thoughts of all others are evill concerning him. It can never be wel with him whose conscience is evill, How troublesome is that mans life to him, who either is alwayes in danger, or suspects alwayes that he is? How unsure is that mans life to him, when he seeth himselfe ready to fall, who riseth or standeth up, and yet is not sure of his life?

Thirdly, These words are expounded to set forth the danger of that particular man, or of those men, how many soever they are, who oppose the wicked oppressor. *He that riseth up is not sure of his life*; As if he had said, if any man rise up to stop this tyrant in the wayes of his oppression, he shall but ruine and undoe himselfe by it. Many an honest just man hath sacrificed his

Qui resistit tyranno statim se vitæ suæ facit.

his life to the wrath of powerfull oppressors, onely by speaking a word against them, how much more by acting against them, and some have not thought their lives deare, that they might doe it.

Fourthly, (Which was toucht before) as this posture of rising up, implyeth Covenant-making, The sence is this; Though the oppressor give you assurance by the strongest Covenants, *yet no man is sure of his life*; that is, there is no trusting to him, though you have his word, though you have his Oath, yet you have not him; though he give you all the Engagements under heaven, yet he gives you no security; for he is unfaithfull, unsteady, a Covenant-breaker; He that makes a covenant or takes an oath meerly for his own advantage, will quickly breake both oathes and covenants for his own advantage, and if no occasion be offered for the making of a breach, he will make one, or at least pretend one.

Et si jurejurando manus et fœdera percutiant, vita nen quærunt occasiones necandi. Sure accipit pro percutere fœdus stando. Hild:

Fifthly, According to our translation, the sence may be given two wayes: First, he riseth up, that is, he groweth very powerfull, and then *no man is sure of his life*, that is, no good man is sure of his life. For he is a terror not only to evill doers (as all Magistrates ought to be *Rom.* 13. 3.) but he is a terror to those that doe well; secondly, *He riseth up*, that is, he groweth angry and enraged, his choller boyls in him, and then no man (of them especially against whom he is enraged) is sure of his life. And when he saith (in reference to any of these cases) *no man is sure of his life*, the meaning is, every man hath great reason to feare, if not utterly to despaire of his life; no man is absolutely sure of his life at any time; For (as the Apostle *James* saith, *Chap.* 4. 14.) *What is our life, it is even a vapour that appeareth a little time, and then vanisheth away*; and how short the time of its appearance will be no man knoweth, therefore (I say) no man can at any time be absolutely sure of his life, no not for the least moment of time, but at some times our lives are lesse sure to us then at others, yea at some times we have no assurance at all of our lives, and we never have lesse hope to live, or lesse hold of life, then when The wicked man *riseth up*.

Si insurrexerit in aliquem & adoriatur, in quem adoritus fuerit, non spectabit se ultra superstitem. Vatabl.

Hence observe.

The power of a wicked man is the danger of all; good men yea all men are in danger when wicked men are in power.

He riseth up, and no man is sure of his life; when the ungodly

are in the hight of proſperity, no man is in ſafety, (*Pro.* 11.10, 11.) *Woen is goeth well with the righteous the City rejoyceth, and when the wicked periſh there is ſafety; by the bleſſing of the upright the City is exalted, but it is overthrowne by the mouth of the wicked*, that is, by the mouth of thoſe wicked men who are in power; their riſing is the fall of the righteous, and with their fall, the righteous riſe. *When the wicked periſh there is ſafety.* And againe, (*Prov* 2.8.12.) *When righteous men do rejoyce, there is great glory.* That is, when righteous men proſper (the effect is put for the cauſe, or the conſequent for the antecedent, joy follows proſperity, when (I ſay) it is thus with righteous men) *there is great glory*, that is, men appeare in their beſt both by words and actions. The joy of the righteous is not alone, many others rejoyce with him, yea, are made joyfull by him. So that when the righteous riſe up in honour and authority, all men ſet themſelves out to the utmoſt, and doe as it were cloath the dignity of righteous men with glory. Then they are willing to ſhew what they have, becauſe they know, they ſhall keep what they have ſafely. And the freeneſſe of their glorying when the righteous rejoyce, ſheweth the freedome which they enjoy under the power of the righteous. *But* (ſaith *Solomon* in the ſame place) *when the wicked riſe* (which is the word of the text) *a man is hidden.* Which may be expounded firſt thus. The wicked when they riſe doe ſcarce ſhew themſelves to be men, they are ſo inhumane and cruel, which ſuites well with the 15th verſe of the ſame Chapter, *As a roaring Lion and a ranging beare, ſo is a wicked ruler over the poore people* So that nothing of a man appeares in them when they are in power. Secondly, we may take the meaning (more nere the preſent poynt) thus; *When the wicked riſe*, that is, to greatneſs & authority, *A man is hidden*, that is, men keepe as cloſe and private as they can, as if they were afraid to be ſeene, and doubted *they ſhould be ruined by their riſing.* When the wicked appeare moſt, the godly run into holes; for they inſtead of being a ſhield of protection and defence to the Godly, are a ſnare, a word, and vexation to all that are about them; they uſe their power for deſtruction, and not for Edification. The Apoſtle (2 *Cor.*13.7.) ſpeaking of the power given him by Chriſt in the Goſpel, ſaith, *It is for Edification, not for deſtruction*; the deſigne of that power is to build up, and not to throw downe; So the great deſigne of

of all power in the hand of the Magiſtrate as well as of the Miniſtery is for Edification, not for deſtruction; deſtruction is that which comes but by accident, by reaſon of the ſin and wickedneſs that men doe; the great buſineſſe of the magiſtrate is to ſave, to build up, and to defend; yet ſuch is the wickedneſſe of mans heart, that many times when he hath power in his hand, *no man is ſure of his life.* He is ſo farre from giving aſſurance, protection, and defence to all by his power, that his power is every mans danger. And hence *Solomon* concludes (*Prov.*29.2.) *When the righteous are in authority the people rejoyce, but when the wicked beareth rule the people mourne* It cannot but be ſad with them who have no thing ſure to them; they muſt needs mourne who have neither eſtate, nor liberty, nor life ſure to them; they muſt needs mourn who ſee nothing ſo ſure to them as ſorrow. As to have our ſpirituall calling and eternall election made ſure to us, is the top of all joy to us in this world; So to have nothing in this world ſure to us, no not ſo much as our life (in the ſenſe explained) ſure to us, is the bottome and loweſt of all that ſorrow which concernes this preſent world. And this ſorrow the wicked mans exaltation brings upon all men; *He riſeth up and no man is ſure of his life.*

But as it followeth,

Verſ. 23. *Though it be given him to be in ſafety, wherein he truſteth, yet his eyes are upon their wayes.*

In this 23 verſe, *Job* further deſcribeth the ſtate of wicked men in their proſperity: we may read the text thus; *If any one giveth to be in ſafety*, &c. and ſo the ſence of this verſe falls in with the Interpretation of the words laſt opened; *If any one giveth to be in ſafety*, that is, this man is ſo wicked, that though any poore man, or any who are in feare of him would beſtow large gifts upon him to bribe him for his favour, or ſtay his hand from oppreſſion, that they might live quietly by him, and ſo ſhould truſt upon him, that having received their money, ſurely he would let them alone, and they ſhould be quiet, *yet his eyes are upon their wayes*; that is, he is looking about him, to pick holes in their Coate, and finde ſome advantage againſt them to bring them into trouble. For as his own Covenants cannot hold him, ſo neither can their curteſies, but *his eyes are* (ſeverely and critically) upon

Si quis ei donet ut tutus agere poſſit ac nitatur illi, oculi ejus ſpeculantur vias ad nocendum. Tygur:

Solent boni dare impijs munera ut confidenter habitent inter illos: at poſtea inſidiantur illis a quibus munera acceperunt. Vatabl:

upon their wayes, to discover some fault, if any be, or if none be-yet to suggest somewhat as matter of accusation, and so of proceeding against them. This is a truth, though a man buy his peace at a very dear rate of wicked men, yet there is no assurance to be had; bribeing and submission, and flattery will not hold long; many examples have proved that these things have not secured good men from the oppression of tyrants, but they have quickly found out a way to ruine them that have been most liberal in rewards to gain their favour, and purchase their own peace. If any one give to be in safety, and trusteth he shall be safe, his trust will fayle him. *The more we trust God the safer we are, but there is no safety to be had by trusting ungodly men.* This is a good sence, yet, rather according to our translation, the words shew the Condition of the wicked man himselfe in his prosperity.

Though it be given him to be in safety, wherein he resteth, yet his eyes are upon their wayes.

That is, though it be given him of God, or though God give him this priviledge *to be in safety*, that is, though he rise up, and put down all that oppose him; though God give him this safety, *yet* &c. The word which we translate, *to be in safety*, signifies the most secure safety, or safety accompanyed with the higheft Confidence, that is, when there is not so much as the least mixture of any feare, not so much as the least Jealousie or suspicion of a change. *Babylon* is described presuming upon such a safety (*Esay* 47. 8) *I sit a Queen and am no widdow, and shall see no sorrow*; and the wicked are spoken of as possessing and enjoying such a safety (*Job* 21. 9.) *Their houses are free from feare, neither is the rod of God upon them*, they are free not only from the rod of God, but from the feare of the rod; though the wicked man live thus Confidently, and all things are with him according to his wish; though God seemes *to crowne him with loving kindnesse and tender mercies*, which are the proper portion of the Saints (*Ps.* 103. 4.) Though he give him his hearts desire (which is a promise peculiar to the godly man (*Psal.* 37. 4.) though it be given him to be thus in safety, *wherein*, or *whereon he resteth*, that is, though as he seeth no danger, so he suspecteth none, but rests in his state, & saith, all's sure, all's well; though the Condition of a wicked man be thus safe and prosperous, and all this by the gift of God, *yet* &c.

לבטח *ad fiduciam, nimirum Barach in significatione imperiali fiduciam sibi conciliare am sin: vacuo pavore.*

Datei securita temsi: e. dat ei quod ipsum reddere possit securum.

Before

Before I explicate *Jobs* exception upon this great gift, Take two or three notes from the consideration of the Author and nature of this gift, as also from his rest upon it.

First, *To be in safety is a great outward mercy.*

We find it promised among many other speciall mercies to the Church in her best estate (*Ezek.* 34.27.) *The tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her encrease, and they shall be safe in their land.* And such was their old promise (*Levit.* 26. 5.) *Ye shall eate your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.* (Deut. 33. 28.) *Israel shall dwell in safety alone.* Though *Israel* be alone he shall dwell in safety, or *Israel* alone shall dwell in safety. He shall have safety when others are in danger. *Thou* (saith *David*, Psal. 4. 8) *makest me dwell in safety*; and saith the Lord concerning the poore man (*Psal.* 12. 5.) *I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him* (Prov. 21. 31.) *Safety is of the Lord.* Yea

Secondly, *The safety even of a wicked man is of the Lord.*

It is given to him (by way of common providence) *to be in safety*; as God takes care of his own servants in mercy, so he takes care of a wicked man in wisdome; he is the *preserver both of man and beast*; he is the preserver not only of good men, but of evill men, who are as beasts. How bad soever any man is, his good, whatsoever he hath, is from the Lord. They may have safety, who shall never have salvation. And they who are neere to eternall damnation, may be farre from danger.

Thirdly, Whereas it is said, *Though he be in safety, wherein he resteth.*

Note.

Outward prosperity is the foundation of a wicked mans peace.

God giveth him safety, and he makes his safety his God. He resteth in the safety which God giveth him, not in God who giveth him safety. Carnall men loose God in the creature; and whereas they should trust in God, because he sendeth them good things, they trust upon the good things which God sendeth. In whatsoever (besides God) we place our trust, that we put in the place of God. *David* was much overshot in this poynt

(*Psal.*

(*Pſal.* 30. 6.) *In my proſperity I ſaid I ſhall never be moved*; God made *David* proſper, and *David* reſted in his proſperity. When *David* was right, he ſaid in his adverſity (and every godly man may ſay in his deepeſt adverſity) *I ſhall never be moved.* God is as ſtrong to us in our greateſt weaknes as when he makes our mountaine ſtrongeſt; and they who think themſelves more immoveable when their mountain is ſtrong, then when it is weak, reſt in their mountaine not in God. Now if *David* (a man after Gods own heart) ſet or reſted his heart ſo much upon his mountaine (that is, his worldly proſperity) becauſe it was ſtrong, how much more may carnal men grow into an admiration of their earthly mountaines, and reſt under their ſhadow and ſhelter, as if they could never be moved? Worldly men do this ſo much that this is made the deſcription of worldly men (*Pſal.* 49. 6.) *They that truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches.* Who theſe are is not expreſſed, as if every one muſt needs know what ſort of men they are who truſt in their wealth; that is, who ſee all well with them, and who ſay all ſhall be well with them, becauſe of the multitude of their riches. For that is properly to truſt in riches, when a man ſaith to himſelfe (as the rich man ſaid, Luke 12. 19) *Soul, take thine eaſe, thou haſt much goods laid up for many yeares, Eate and drinke, and be merry.* *Job* had another ſpirit in the midſt of his proſperity (*Ch.* 3. 26.) *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt*, &c. he ſpake there of his Condition before he was in trouble, when he had ſome thouſands of ſheep, ſome hundreds of oxen, with a multitude of Camels and Aſſes, when he had many ſons and daughters, with ſervants in great number; When it was thus with him, when no Cloud had in the leaſt darkned his day, nor ſo much as a graine of gall or wormwood embittered his cup, when he was thus ſafe, yet he ſaid I was not in ſafety. When the Devil ſaid he was ſo ſafe that he could not touch him, *Thou haſt made a hedge about him*, yet he ſaid, *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt*, that is, he looked upon his hedge as upon that which might quickly be broken through, & upon his mountain, as that which might not only be quickly moved, but quite removed, he ſaw all he had ſhakeing and tottering, and ſo could not have any reſt in any thing which he had, he had reſt in oppoſition to murmuring and diſcontent about the things of this world, but he was reſtleſſe in oppoſition to confiding in and ſatisfaction with the things of this world. In this reſpect his very ſafety was unſafe, and his reſt, reſtleſſe to him. Only the carnal man, when God giveth him to be in ſafety, reſteth in it; he ſits downe and concludeth that he hath enough at preſent, and that his Enough will laſt for ever; He reſteth in his ſafety, not only as being out of danger, but above it. *Job* having thus ſet forth the outward ſtate of the wicked man, *he is in ſafety*, as alſo the ſtate of his inward man, *He reſteth in it*; ſheweth us in the laſt place and cloſe of the verſe, what God is doing towards him, while he is doing thus, or notwithſtanding he doth thus,

Yet his eyes are upon their wayes.

Some read, *though his eyes are upon their wayes*, and give the ſence thus, *though God ſeeth all their wickednes, yet he lets them proceed and proſper*; That's a truth; God doth not let wicked men proſper, becauſe hee doth not know how wicked they are, or what wickedneſſe they doe; hee knowes well enough, how ill they are, and what evill they doe, his eyes upon their wayes, while they abuſe his mercyes, and (in ſtead of reſting in him who gives them ſafety) reſt in the ſafety which he hath given them.

Secondly, Others read thus, *and his eyes are upon their wayes*; as if the words were a further deſcription of the wicked mans outward proſperity, and a deſcription of it to ſuch a height, as if the eyes of God were fixed or faſtned upon his wayes, to take care of him, and to cauſe him to proſper in them; as if the eyes of God did drop bleſſings upon him, and guide him every day ſucceſſefully in all his undertakings. The eye of God upon a place or perſon implyeth (in Scripture language) his preſence with them for good. (*Deut.* 11. 12.) *The land whither thou goeſt in to poſſeſſe it, is not like Ægypt*, &c. *but it is a land which the Lord thy God careth for, the eyes of the Lord thy God are alwayes upon it, from the beginning of the yeare even unto the end of the yeare*; as if he had ſayd, The Lord is unceſſantly watchfull over it, both to prevent evill, and to beſtow good upon it. Read the ſame ſence of the phraſe (*Ezra* 5. 5. *Pſal.* 33. 18. *Pſal.* 34. 15.) And uſually in Scripture when the eye of God is ſayd to be upon any, it is not taken in an evill ſence unleſſe ſo expreſt: as (*Amos* 9. 4.) *Mine eyes ſhall be upon them for evill, and not for good.* So that while *Job* ſayth, *And his eyes are upon their wayes*, The words, according to this

Quaſi intentis in ipſos dei ipſius oculis ut eis omnia ex ipſorum animi ſententia ſuccedevent. Bez:

Plus eſt quod probatur affectu quam quod ſermone laudatur. Ambroſ:

this reading, continue, if not lighten the former ſence, ſhewing further the outward proſperity of evill men by the ſeeming favour of God to them.

But I rather cloſe with our reading, *yet his Eyes are upon their wayes*; as if he had ſaid; *Do not think that God taketh no notice of their ſinfull courſes, becauſe he gives them to be in ſafety, and in ſuch ſafety, that they reſt and truſt upon it, for I tell you the eyes of God are upon their wayes.*

Hence obſerve.

God alwayes ſeeth the wayes of wicked men, or he ſeeth wicked men in all their wayes.

It is no argument that God neglecteth the government of the world, becauſe wicked men are in ſafety; He fully conſidereth their wayes, who either through ignorance are wandring from, or, through wilfullneſſe, turning out of his wayes.

His oppoſite connivence & diſſimulation Coc.

And the eye of God is upon the wayes of ſuch men, not onely to ſee which way, or whither they are going (*Job* 34. 21.) but to puniſh them for their going wrong. God will not connive at, nor diſſemble what he ſeeth when he ſeeth what is unfit. (*Hab.* 3. 6.) *He ſtood and meaſured the earth, he beheld and drove aſunder the nations*, that is, he divided and brake thoſe nations in whom he beheld iniquity. (*Zach.* 9. 8.) *And no oppreſſour ſhall paſſe through them any more, for now I have ſeene with mine eyes*, that is, I have exactly ſeen, I have taken perfect notice of them and their oppreſſours, & I will in juſtice ſo oppreſſe their unjuſt oppreſſors, that they ſhall be rid of them for ever, *No oppreſſour ſhall paſſe through them any more.* We may make a threefold difference about the Eye of God upon the perſons or wayes of men.

First, The Eye of God is upon the wayes of men, to obſerve what they doe, his eye diſtinguiſheth between good and evill, and diſcerneth, as much as beholdeth what is done; His ſeeing the wayes of men is a cleare underſtanding of them.

Secondly, The eye of God is upon the wayes of men to proſper and bleſſe them in what they doe well. The eye of God upon the righteous implyeth, yea and conveigheth mercy to the righteous.

Thirdly, The eye of God is upon the wayes of men, to puniſh and chaſten them for what they doe amiſſe. God hath a vindictive

dictive or a revenging eye, as well as an intuitive or a beholding eye. This eye of God is upon all the wayes of wicked men, though for a time he giveth them to be in ſafety, wherein they reſt. And becauſe God ſeeth the wayes both of the righteous and the wicked, therefore God commandeth us to *ſay to the righteous it ſhall be well with them, for they ſhall eate the fruit of their doings. Wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him.* Every man ſhall receive from the hand of God, according to what God hath ſeene with his eye.

Laſtly, We may take theſe words as an admiring Concluſion, like that (*ver.* 12.) *Yet God layeth not folly to them.* They doe fooliſhly, yet God doth not deale with them according to their folly; ſo here they doe wickedly, *yet his eyes are upon their wayes.* As if he had ſaid, it is a wonderfull thing, even matter of aſtoniſhment, that God who ſo exactly ſeeth and knoweth the wayes of wicked men, ſhould ſuffer them to be an houre in ſafety. Is it not a wonder that God ſhould ſuffer them to live long and ſafely, ſinning, who deſerve to dye for every ſin? As all wicked men who dye impœnitently dye in their ſins, ſo God ſuffers many wicked men to ſin till they dye; he ſeeth their wayes and will not ſtop them till they have run their full courſe. Here is the patience and long ſuffering of God. Men ſin to a wonder, when they goe on in ſin after many ſmitings; as the Lord complains by his Prophet (*Amo:* 4.) *I ſmote them with the peſtilence, & with the ſword*, &c. *yet have they not returned unto me ſaith the Lord*, Now as it aggravates mans ſin, to ſin under wrath and ſmitings, ſo it hightens the goodneſſe and patience of God to admiration, that he doth not ſmite men in their ſin, ſeing he beholds them in their ſin. *His Eyes are upon their wayes to behold every ſin*, and every ſin is not only diſpleaſing but burdenſome and grievous to him. What a miracle of patience doth this diſcover in God? The Prophet *Habackuk* moves the Lord to revenge, and wonders how he could hold his hand from puniſhing, while his eye beheld that done which was ſo diſpleaſing. (*Hab.* 1. 12, 13.) *Art not thou from everlaſting O Lord my God, mine holy One? we ſhall not dye, thou haſt ordained them for Judgment, and O God thou haſt ſtabliſhed them for Correction. Thou art of purer Eyes then to behold evill, and canſt not look on iniquity. Wherefore lookeſt thou on*

them that deale treacherously, and holdest thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he? As if he had sayd, Lord, I know thou beholdest all the Evill in the world, and art of purer eyes then to behold it with any delight or approbation. Now seeing it is so, *why then doest thou looke on them that deale treacherously?* In the former part of the verse he sayd, *Thou canst not looke on iniquity*, and in the latter he saith, *why doest thou looke on them that deale treacherously?* There is a twofold looke of God; First, (as was toucht before) a looke of approbation; secondly, a looke of patience. And so the meaning of the Prophet is, seeing, O Lord, thou canst not looke upon sin approvingly, why doest thou looke upon it patiently? *And holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoure the righteous.* As if he had sayd, How is it (Lord) that thou doest not breake forth into the severest rebukes against them? How is it that they have not so much (to appearance) as a frowne or an ill word from thee, who have deserved blowes and utter breakings? Indeed if God had but the patience of all Creatures, had he but the patience of men and Angels, the sin of man would spend it out in one day: God could not hold his tongue nor his hand an houre, Considering that he clearely discerneth all the wickednes that is in the wayes of men, and that every the least unevennesse as well as wickednes is extreamly displeasing to him, were not his Infinite patience; God could not hold but destroy all the wicked of the world, or all that world which lyeth in wickednes, were it not that he is resolved to magnifie his patience. And though for reasons knowne to himselfe, hee beares with those that are burdensome to him very long, not only many dayes but yeares, yet the time is at hand when he will bring them to Judgement, and Judge them according to those wayes upon which his eyes have been. *Then the wicked shall finde that as the eyes of God have been upon all their wayes, so that he hath not at all, or not in the least been pleased with any of them.*

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 24. Vers. 24, 25.

They are exalted for a little while, but are gone, and brought low, they are taken out of the way as all other, and cut off as the tops of the eares of Corne. And if it be not so now, who will make me a lyar, and make my speech nothing worth.

JOB still proceedeth to describe, and here concludeth his description, of the state of wicked men, he hath (as hath been shewed in the exposition of the former part of the Chapter) drawne the blackest character of their wickednesse, as also given the fayrest prospect of their outward happinesse; They sin and prosper, they sin and are safe, they have much good while they doe much evill.

This text speakes againe of their prosperity, yet with a diminution, *they are exalted* (but it is only) *for a little while, for they are gone and brought low, they are taken out of the way, as all others, and cut off as the tops of the eares of Corne.*

There are two opinions concerning the general scope of these words.

First, Some conceive that *Jobs* aime is to shew, that both in life, and death, wicked men fare like other men; *They are exalted for a little while, as all others are, they are gone, brought low, and taken out of the way as all others are.*

Yet, secondly, I rather incline that he here intends to set forth the miserable conclusion of wicked men, not only as they are cut off from worldly enjoyments, as all men sooner or later are, but as they are cut off from worldly enjoyments in a way which is not common to other men, or which is not the common way of man. And the reason why I rather incline to this as *Jobs* scope, is, because these various expressions of the same thing, *they are gone, they are brought low, they are taken out of the way, they are cut off* (these various expressions, I say) seeme to carry somewhat more then the remove of men out of the world, by the ordinary way of dying, or then by a natural death.

Vers 24.

Verſ. 24. *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone.*

They, that is, the wicked, the adulterer, the thiefe, the oppreſſour (ſuch he had before deſcribed) *are exalted*, they grow great, and ſpread farre, they grow high, or are advanced to high places. The originall word which we render, *to be exalted*, ſignifies to be lifted up, or any thing that is lifted up in height, or greatneſſe, and hereupon ſome Criticks tells us that the Great City *Rome* had her name from this Hebrew roote; *Rome* as all (who know any thing of antiquity) know, is a City which hath been exalted over the nations, a City great in ſtrength, and mighty in power; *Rome* is as much as, *height, or exaltation*; As *Abraham* is a *high father*, an *exalted father*.

רמם levavit exaltavit, exaltatus fuit; latini Romã hac originatione decorare geſtiunt ab magnitudinem.

They are exalted.

The word may be applyed to a twofold exaltation: firſt, an inward exaltation by pride; ſome riſe within, faſter then they riſe without, yea there are ſome that riſe very high within, when they are caſt very *low without*; they exalt and lift up themſelves in pride of ſpirit, though they are caſt downe in ſtate. The word is often applyed to note pride or haughtineſſe. (*Micah* 2. 3.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, behold againſt this family doe I deviſe an evill, from which ye ſhall not remove your necks, neither ſhall ye goe haughtily.* The word is, *ye ſhall not goe in your heights*, in your altitudes, as ye have done, the caſe ſhall be altered with you, and the Tables turned; *for this is an evill time*, that is, an evill time to you, a time of calling you to an account about, and of puniſhing you for all your wickedneſſe, and eſpecially for your pride. As ye have made it an evill time by your ſin, ſo ye ſhall find it to be an evill time to and by your ſmart. And this hight of ſpirit often breakes forth, and is ſignified in height of action, or in haughty poſtures, *The lifting up of the head, the ſtretching out of the neck*, Thus (Iſa. 7. 11.) *The loftie looks of man ſhall be humbled.* The heart looks out at the eye, the lofty heart makes a lofty looke; according to the frame of the heart, is the caſt of the eye; the eye is not proud, but as it is inſtructed, and tutoured by the heart, ſo it acts proudly, and looks haughtily. And thus they alwayes act, who though they are not exalted, yet have a mind to exalt themſelves, who when others

others caſt no honour upon them, yet they will take it, and reach after it. Thus the word is applicable to internall ſelfe exaltation, as well as to externall exaltation, or exaltation by others. For as many are outwardly humbled, who are not at all humble: and as ſome are inwardly humbled, who are not at all outwardly humbled, (they have an humble lowly frame of heart, and are active in humbling of themſelves) ſo many are inwardly exalted, who never had nor deſerved, in the leaſt, any outward exaltation. They are active to exalt themſelves, whom no man beſides themſelves, thinks worthy to be exalted. The men of whom *Job* ſpeaks were doubtleſſe forward enough to exalt themſelves, yet

I underſtand him rather ſpeaking of their outward exaltation For *Job* is here deſcribing the proſperity of wicked men, not their pride. Though, we know, proſperity is the occaſion of pride, and men uſually grow high-minded, when they grow high in the world. As by pride cometh contention, ſo by exaltation cometh pride.

They are exalted.

That is, they are great, and rich, they are promoted to honour, and ſet uppermoſt among men.

For a little while.

The Originall in ſtrictneſſe is onely thus; *They are exalted a little.* But the word is taken two wayes in Scripture. מעט pauxillum.

Firſt, For *little in degree*, or *for a little deale* (as we ſay) that is, for a thing that is little (*Pſal* 36 16.) *A little that a righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked*: His morſel is better then the others feaſt, his penny is better then the wicked mans pound. Thus *Jonathan* ſpake (1 *Sam.* 14. 29.) when *Saul* had given that ſevere charge that no man ſhould eate till the Sun went downe. *My father hath troubled the land, ſee I pray you how my eyes are inlightened, becauſe I taſted a little of this honey*: As if he had ſaid, I did not eat much, not ſo much as to delight my ſelfe, much leſſe ſo much as to glut my ſelfe, I did eate but a drop or two, and mine eyes are wonderfully inlightned, that is, my ſpirits are much refreſhed and cheared, for naturally, when a man is faint, his eye-ſight failes.

Secondly, For a *little in time*, or for a ſhort ſpace of time

Pſal.

(*Psal.* 37. 10.) *For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be, yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and he shall not be*, that is, he shall not be in power, he shall not flourish in worldly pompe many dayes. The birth of his prosperity shall not be farre in time from the death of it, nor the grave of all his glory from the cradle of it. So (*Psal.* 8. 5.)) *Thou hast made him a little lower then the Angels*; which prophecy of Christ is cited (*Heb.* 2. 7.) Now Christ was not made a little lower then the Angels in degree For he was the Lord of the Angels, and when God brought him *his first begotten into the world, he sayd, And let all the Angels of God worship him.* But Christ was made lower then the Angels for a little time; And so we put in the Margin, *Thou madest him a little while inferior to the Angels.* Namely, for the while or time when he was abased by death and lay in the grave; yet we may say also that was Christ made *a little lower then the Angels* in his taking upon him our nature; The Angelicall nature being higher then the humane, as considered in it selfe. We may expound the word here in eyther sence, *they are exalted a little*, that is, first, they have a little exaltation; secondly, how great soever we may conceave their exaltation to be, yet they are exalted but for a little while or time. We restraine the word to this last sence, as referring to the space of time, wherein the wicked are aloft; *They are exalted for a little while.*

Hence observe.

The exaltation of wicked men shall not continue.

They may be high built, but they have not a sure foundation, they may floate aloft, but they have no consistance below, they are as vapours rising from the earth, or as meteors hanging in the ayre, both which are lifted up only for a little while, and are gone. *Athanasius* said concerning the wrathful reigne of *Julian the Apostate, Let us be quiet, it is a little cloud which will soone passe away.* The wicked mans civil honor is but *a vapour* (as the Apostle *James* speaks of the natural life of every man) *that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.* The exaltation of wicked men, is but for a little while, For, first, their exaltation is usually but for a part of their lives, and that the lesser part; and that cannot (upon any reckoning) be more then a little while. Secondly, their longest and utmost exaltation can be but for their lives, and the whole life of man is but a little while. *David* taking the exactest measure of his life, saith, *Behold, thou hast made my dayes as an hand breadth, and mine age is nothing before thee* (Psal. 39. 5.) The whole life of man is very short, and the preferment, or exaltation of wicked men is either much shorter then their lives, or their lives are much shortned by their exaltation. They act their power beyond the bounds of Justice, and so forfeit their lives, before they come neer the bounds of nature. Now if life last but a little, and they are exalted but a little while of their lives, or if their lives be cut off within a while after they are exalted, then they have but little exaltation. Many spend a great part of their life before they arrive at exaltation, or preferment in this world, and there are many who out-live their own exaltation, and there are not a few, who loose their lives by the abuse of their exaltation. The worldly enjoyments of all men are short, and evil mens enjoyments are shortest. Saints shall have enjoyments hereafter commensurate with eternity, but the best of Saints here, have neither any lease of their lives, nor of their enjoyments. And if it be so with the best of men, then much more with the worst of men, who as they are wrapt up in the common condition of humane frayelty, with all other men, so they lye under some peculiar curses or threatnings which other men doe not. And how soone may a curse cast those downe who are most highly exalted, and blast or wither all their beauty and bravery, whose branches are greenest, and whose faces shine brightest with earthly splendour.

Secondly, Forasmuch as the word signifieth a little thing, as well as a little time, a little deale, as well as a little while, a thing which in regard of the smallnesse of it, is inconsiderable as wel as that which in regard of the weaknesse of it, is not durable.

Observe.

The greatest exaltation that any man can have in the things of this world is but a little exaltation.

That man is but little exalted, how much soever he is exalted, who is onely exalted in the things of this world; That which is but little in it selfe, cannot make us very great, though we should have it all as ours, or in our possession. How little a thing is all this world, and how little a part hath any one of this little? The whole world is but little, what then is a little part of it? which yet

is all that falls to the share of the greatest men in this world. Philosophers say that the whole body of the earth and Sea together, is but as a poynt or prick with a pen compared to the heavens; and yet there are very few of the great men of the earth, who possesse so much as a mathamatical poynt or prick with a pen in the body of the earth. We may say, that the day of the greatest man in the world, is but a *day of small things*. The Prophet to encourage the meane beginnings of *Sions* deliverance (*Zech.* 4 10.) sayd, *Who hath despised the day of small things?* As if he had said, I know many doe it, some hoping and others fearing that these small beginnings will have smaller endings, or end in nothing, but in the joy of the enemies, and in the sorrow and disappointment of the friends of *Sion*. But I say unto you, take heed of despising *the day of small things*, that is, the least appearances of deliverance and salvation to *Sion*. Now as we are not to despise the workes of God, because they are small, so we have no reason to be proud of, but even to despise the things of the world, for they are small. Men have great thoughts and make much adoe about small things, when they have to doe with the greatest things on this side heaven. *The greatest things that continue onely for a little while, are but little worth, then how little worth are those things, which besides that they continue but a little while, are themselves but little?* Though wicked men are exalted, yet no man hath cause to be troubled at it, or envy them; They are not blessed because exalted, for they are exalted but a little, and that onely for a little while. It should not be much to us what any man is as to worldly enjoyments, no nor what we our selves are as those enjoyments, seeing whatsoever others are, or whatsoever we are in that capacity is but for a little while. The Apostle saith (2 *Cor.* 4 18.) *We looke not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen*; that is, we make not the things of the world our scope, but the things which lye beyond this world, which are seen by faith onely; And the reason why he looked not at these things which are seene, was because the things that are seen are temporall; *those things which are seen, will not be long seene*, they are but for a while, and therefore not to be much looked after. *The Things which are not seene shall be seen for ever*, they are eternal, and therefore most worthy to be looked after. The world hath beauty and glory in it, but this staines

staines the beauty of all earthly glory, that it may be so quickly stained. The evills and troubles of this world, should not much trouble us, nor the afflictions of this world present much afflict us, because they are but for a while, suppose a godly man be cast downe, and laid low in reference to the world, he is laid low but for a while, therefore no great matter to him, he hath no great reason to be troubled at it; as the Apostle argueth in the same Chapter (*ver.* 16.) *For this cause we faint not, for our light afflictions which are but for a moment*, &c. therefore he calls them light, how great and how heavy soever in their owne nature, though they were as heavy as a mountaine, he calls them light, because as to their duration they were but for a moment. We say, A light thing carryed a great way or a great while becometh heavy: He that puts only a pound stone in his pocket, will be very sensible of and much burdened with the weight of it, before he comes to the end of a long journey; whereas a great weight is not much burdensome, if it be not much borne. Now as worldly evils and troubles are light, because but short, so are worldly comforts and honours, especially the worldly comforts & honours of wicked men; of whom it is expressely said, not only by way of assertion (in which sense it may be said of all men) but also by way of commination, *They are exalted for a little while*. Againe, as the profession of hypocrites, hath a kind of appearing goodlinesse & beauty, but it is little worth, or it is of no worth, because they endure but for a little while, they are but Temporyes, as the word is in the parable of the Sower. Or as the Lord complaineth by his Prophet (*Hos.* 6. 4.) *O Ephraim, what shall I doe unto thee, O Judah, what shall I doe unto thee, for your goodnesse is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew, it goeth away*; goodnesse it self is scarce good, goodnesse is little worth, if it be but as a morning cloud, if it be but as the dew that goeth away when the heate of the Sunne cometh. The worth and glory of true grace stands in this, that it stands and endures for ever; let the world turn which way it will, true grace stands its ground and turnes not away. Now if all the goodnes and pretended holiness of hypocrites and formalists be nothing worth, because it is (like a cloud, or a dew) only for a little while; how little worth is the exaltation of wicked men, which goeth away and is as quickly gone, as a cloud is scattered and blowne away by the wind, or a dew exhaled by the rising

sing Sunne. We may say of all the glory of the wicked, as the same Prophet *Hosea* saith of *Ephraim* (Chap. 9. 11.) *As for Ephraim, their glory shall flee away like a bird from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception*; that is, it shall quickly depart; *by their glory*, some understand their children; As if he had said, *Their children shall flee from the birth*; that is, if born alive they shall dye as soon as borne; *Their children shall flee from the wombe*; that is, they shall not be borne alive, they shall be abortive; *Their children shall flee from the conception*; that is, they shall not be so much as conceived. We may read the Prophet backward, and beginning with the last first, say; *Their glory*, that is, their children, or whatsoever else they glory in and make their glory, *shall flee from conception*; that is, it shall not be conceaved, or have any being at all, and if conceived and so have a being yet it *shall flee from the womb*, that is, it shall never come to a compleat being, but shall be marr'd in the making; or if it be borne and so have a perfect being, yet *it shall flee from the birth*, that is, it shall dye as soone as born, and come to its grave in stead of or as soon as to a cradle. Thus he describes the evill that shall come upon all their glory, it shall suddenly fly away, and this spoyles the beauty of all that earthly glory, with which the wicked shine; *They are exalted for a little while*. This suddain vanishing of the wicked mans glory is further described in foure expressions; first, *they are gone*; secondly, *brought low*; thirdly, *they are taken out of the way*; fourthly, *they are cut off as the top of the eares of Corne*.

Et non ipse. *Heb. i. e. non ullus ipsorũ hac dicendi formula solent Hebræi significare, quod omnino deleatur ut perit.* Pined. *Mutat pluralẽ in singularem ut significet quemlibet eorum interire.* Drus. *Pronomen singulare cum verbo plurali notat distributionem.*

First, *They are gone*; the Hebrew is, *they are not*; this kinde of speaking is used to signifie a total or utter perishing. They are so gone, as if they had lost not onely their existence but their essence. The original text is singular; *They are exalted, and he is not*, or, *he not*; he doth not say, *they not*, but *he not*; *Job* changeth the number from *They* to *He*, to signifie that *every one of them is not*, or *that, not any one of them is*. God will deale thus with every single man of them, *he is not*; we say, *They are gone*; they that goe out of one condition into another, are not as they were, and as to their former state, they are not at all. They who goe from place to place, from state to state, though from a state of life to a state of death, have a being, and therefore we translate wel, *not to be*, by, *to be gone*. Some read the words thus; *They are exalted, and within a little while they are not*; we say, *they are exalted a little*

tle while, and are gone, or *are not*. The meaning of both readings is the same. To say, *they are exalted for a little while and are gone*, is as much as, and no more then to say, *they are exalted, and within a little while are gone*. Thus *David* spake from his own experience concerning the prosperity of wicked men (*Psal.* 37. 35.) *I have seene the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree, yet he passed away; and loe he was not: yea I sought him, but he could not be found. Davids* experience falls in fully with *Jobs* assertion; *They are exalted for a little while, and are gone, or are not.*

in singulo, vel collectionem singulorum. Pisc.

Hence note.

The worldly felicity or exaltation of a wicked man, or a wicked man in his worldly felicity and exaltation, shall be as if he had never been.

Worldly men and worldly things are scarse any thing while they are seene, and therefore when once they disappeare and are not seen at all, it may well be said, They are not at all. God who is altogether invisible, is *an eternal being, from everlasting to everlasting he is God* (Ps. 90. 2.) But all those things which are altogether visible, are altogether vanishing; They are going from us, while they are with us; and when they are gone, they are as if they had never been with us. And as it is with worldly things, so with worldly persons, when they are gone, they are not, as to any enjoyment, though they shall ever be as to punishment. *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone.*

And brought low.

That is the second step; Some might say, possibly they are gone to a better estate, then before; they were high before, now higher; some remove from greatnesse, to greatnesse, from dignity, to dignity, therefore *Job* explaineth his meaning, *They are gone*

And brought low.

Or degraded from their high places, They are brought low by disgrace, or into disgrace, They are brought low by poverty, or into the lowest depth of poverty. In whatsoever they were exalted, they are now made low. Some expound it of death; *They are brought low*, that is, downe to the grave, and that is low indeed.

deed. The grave is called the lower part of the earth; And yet the wicked shall be brought lower then the grave, even as low as hel, or as the *lowest hel*, as *Moses* speakes (*Deut.* 32 22.) The Apostle *James* saith (*Chap.* 1. 9. 10.) *Let the Brother of low degree rejoyce, in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low;* A poore brother, or a brother of low degree seemes to be farre from exaltation yet he hath cause to rejoyce in that he is exalted and he is doubly exalted; first, as he is a brother to the Saints, and a member of Christ; secondly, as he is a sufferer, or afflicted for Christ. Every godly man of the lowest degree is exalted in one of these wayes, and many of them in both; and any man hath cause to rejoyce in these spiritual honours & exaltations, how low soever he is in temporals. But how is the rich, or the brother of high degree made low? and why should he rejoyce in that he is made low? for though there are readings of the text by a supply of other words, yet I judge that to be the best; But why should *he rejoyce in that he is made low?* As the poore mans exaltation before spoken of, is spiritual, so also is the rich mans humiliation. The rich man hath great cause to rejoyce when he is spiritually humbled, and made low in his own eyes, when he is highest in the eye of the world. To be made low in our own eyes, or in the sence of our own sinfulnesse while we are rich and outwardly exalted, is a great work of Grace, But to be brought low by the hand of God, while we are high and exalted in the eyes of men, and in our own eyes, is the punishment of sin. Godly Great men are made low in their own thoughts by grace. Wicked men though never so great, shall be brought low in the sight of others for their sin. *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone, and brought low.*

Hence Note.

First; *As the worldly estates of all men, so most of all the estates of worldly men are subject to changes.*

Now they are exalted and lifted up, within a while they are depressed and cast downe. The providences of God ring the changes of mens estates all the world over. As the estates and conditions of several men differ at the same time; some men are honourable, others are base, some men are rich, others are poore, some are exalted, others are cast downe. So the estates and conditions of the same men differ as much at severall times; They who were hono-

honorable are abased, the rich become poore, and the men of exaltation are brought low. Thus the hils are turned into valleyes, and the highest mountaines, that is, men as high and strong as mountaines (as we read in the Prophecy of *Zechary* (Chap. 4. 7.) become plains. Our spiritual estate is like mount *Sion*, which shall never be moved, 'tis founded upon a rocke that can never be shaken; But Temporall things are like a wheele which moves continually, and that spoke which is now aloft (as that Captive King said to his Conquerour) is quickly turned to the ground, *and brought low.* The Apostle gives an excellent caution in reference to our spirituall estate (1 *Cor.* 10 12.) *Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.* And I may say in reference to any mans temporal estate, He that is surest of his standing, may fail not-withstanding all his heed. And if any one (as the Prophet once questioned, *by whom shall Jacob arise for he is smal?*) should question by whom shall wicked men be brought low, seeing they are so highly exalted: It must be answered, that as *Jacob* riseth when he is fallen, so the wicked fall when they are risen, by the hand or power of God He bringeth them low by his appointment, and he bringeth them low by his power. (*Psal.* 75. 7.) *God is the Judge, he putteth downe one and setteth up another.* And he it is that setteth up and putteth down the same man. *They are gone, and brought low.*

They are taken out of the way as all others.

The original word signifies to narrow, contract or shut up; as also to hasten, extend, and shoote forth; and the reason is, because by contracting, or drawing any thing back, we shoot it forward with more force and speed. We see how snakes and other creeping things contract, and gather themselves up, and then cast themselves forward with much advantage. Both significations of the word are made use of in this place by Interpreters. Some rendring, *They shall be shut up, they are brought low, and shut up*, they (like prisoners) are under restraint, or they are restrained in prison. They are apt to abuse their liberty and their power, to the wrong of others and therefore they are cut short and kept in; not onely are their hornes broken, their clawes cut, and their nayles pared, but themselves are shut up like beasts, which hurt him that is next whosoever it is. It is reason they should be in safe

קפץ contraxit continuit, obturavit, in pies, festinavit ire & è contrario extendere se, transilire.

Claudentur sicut omnes. Pagn: Reg:

ſafe cuſtody, who being at liberty no man is in ſafety.

Saltabunt è loco ſuo Rab: Moy: Mr *Broughton* gives a ſence of the word, which imports not their reſtraint, but their flight, *Every one are made to skip away*; They ſhal skip or leap out of their places, or if they were forced or frighted; as one of the Rabbins tranſlates it. The meaning of both rendrings meets in the ſame thing; for whether a man be ſhut up in priſon, or forced to run and hide himſelfe to avoyd reſtraint and impriſonment, his condition is much alike. By the former he is a priſoner, and by the latter he hath loſt his liberty. The difference is not great, whether a man be where he would not, or dares not be where he would. *They are ſhut up*, or, *they are made to run away*. Both which readings comply fayrely enough with ours, *They are taken out of the way*. For whether a man be carryed away by force, or flyeth for feare, *He is taken out of the way*.

Hence note.

God doth remove, and take wicked men out of their place when they are in their higheſt exaltation.

High eſtates have no ſecurity in them, yea they are leſſe ſecure, then the loweſt eſtate; and that not onely becauſe they are more ſubject to the envy of men, but becauſe they who are in high places make themſelves more lyable to the wrath of God. They uſe their power to the caſting downe and taking away of the innocent, and therefore God is engaged to take them away. For, as God often takes his owne people *out of harmes way, ſo he takes the wicked quite away that they may do no more harme. The righteous periſh* (that is, dye, ſayth the Prophet) *and no man layeth it to heart, and mercifull men are taken away*, they are taken away upon that account which few conſider, *even from the evill to come*, (Iſa. 57. 1, 2.) God takes away the righteous, leſt they ſhould ſuffer evill, and he takes away the wicked, leſt they ſhould continue to doe more evill. The wicked would know no bounds if left to themſelves, and let alone; Therefore God bounds them and ſaith (as the Apoſtle prophecyed of ſuch evill doers, 2 *Tim.* 3. 9.) *They ſhall proceed no further, for their folly ſhall be made manifeſt to all men*; they ſhall be taken out of the way. God will give them a ſtop; 'tis a forme of ſpeech like that which the Apoſtle uſeth (2 *Theſ.* 2. 7.) *The myſtery of iniquity doth already worke, onely he who now letteth, will let, till he be taken out of the way*; there was

was a rub, a remora in the way of the man of ſin, that he could not doe what he would: The power of the *Romane Empire* ſtood in his way, and till that was taken out of the way, he could do no great feates, he could not appear in his colours. Now as God tooke away the power of the *Romane Empire*, as to that hight wherein it had formerly been exerciſed, That the man of ſin, might have a liberty to doe evill and fill up the meaſure of his iniquity; ſo God takes away many wicked men, leſt they ſhould do more evill, and even exceed the meaſure of their iniquity. *They are taken out of the way*

as all others.

This may be expounded; firſt, of perſons; ſecondly, of things; *They ſhall be taken away*, and be ſent out of the world as the meaneſt perſons, or according to the common lot of all men. This is underſtood two wayes; firſt, to ſhew that in death all men fare alike, ſo that we cannot diſtinguiſh a good man from a wicked man by the manner of his death; ſecondly, to ſhew that they who are higheſt in the world, are as ſoone overthrown by death as the loweſt.

Transferuntur ut cæteri: nec pejus illis accidit quam cæteris. Etſi ad tempus evecti tandem amplius non extant: tamen non aliter quam alij. Bez:

Hence Note.

God can as eaſily remove mountaines as mole-hils, and as quickly triumph in his anger over the Greateſt, as over the leaſt.

They who are higheſt in this world, are no more in his hand, who is higher then the higheſt, then the loweſt of this world are. No creature ſtrength can ſtand againſt God. When we ſee enemies high we are ready to ſay, who ſhall pull them downe, but God can pull them downe, *as all others*, the high Cedars, the ſtrong oakes ſhall be like the pooreſt ſhrub. *By whom ſhall Jacob ariſe, for he is ſmall?* (ſaith the Prophet *Amos* 7. 2.) O how ſhall the weakneſſe of *Jacob* be ſtrengthned, and the lowneſſe of *Jacob* be exalted? *by whom ſhall Jacob ariſe, for he is ſmall?* as we are apt to queſtion the riſing of the people of God, becauſe they are ſmall, ſo the fall of the enemies of God and of his people, becauſe they are ſtrong and great. By whom ſhall the bloody enemies be brought down, for they are high? by whom ſhall our oppreſſours be deſtroyed, for they are ſtrong? Such are the reaſonings and queſtionings of our feare and unbeliefe. The text and poynt

make answer; *They shall be taken away as all others*, even as the weakest and the meanest in the world; it puts God to no more trouble, to pull the strongest Princes out of their Pallaces, Forts, or Castles, when they stand in his way, & hinder his designes, then to turne a beggar out of his cottage, or house of Hurdles. Such a scorne is put upon the King of *Babylon* (Isa. 14. 10.) *All they shall speake, and say unto thee, Art thou also become weake as we? art thou become like unto us?* Thou thoughtest thy selfe impregnable in power, and thou didst looke upon us as contemptible weaklings, but now thou art become weake as we. While God himselfe speakes great things of Magistrates, and lifts them up as it were beyond the state of man, he yet with the same breath, makes them in one thing but paralel with all other men; ye rule or have power over others like God, but in your selves ye are as weake and mortal as any other sort of men (*Ps.* 82 6.) *I have said ye are Gods, and all of you are children of the most high but ye shall dye like men*, like the common sort of men, *and ye shall fall like one of the Princes* Or rather, by much, as some render the Hebrew, *and the Princes shall dye as one*, or, *as any one*; that is as any ordinary man; For indeed there appeares no argument in the words reaching the scope of the place, according to our translation, to say, That Magistrates shall *fall like one of the Princes*, is no abatement to them, but to say, Princes shall fall like any one, is a great abatement and fall to them, and fully reacheth the sence of the present observation.

Secondly, These words, *as all others*, are expounded of other things, that is, as all worldly things.

Hence Note.

Man in his greatest enjoyments is in as perishing a condition as any thing he injoyeth.

Worldly men are as vain and transitory, as worldly things are, They are as soone gone as their riches, or their honours, or whatsoever they most desired or trusted to here below. That which they have is perishing, and so are they too. Christ calleth all the things of the world, *meate that perisheth*, (Joh. 6. 27.) The wicked man shall perish and be taken away, as all perishing things are, upon which he sets his heart, or which he hath in his hand. We are alwayes dying, and so is all that we have, ours are dying comforts, dying

Accepimus peritura perituri.

dying riches, dying honours, ours is dying strength, dying beauty. (*Isa.* 40. 6.) *All flesh is grasse, and the goodlinesse thereof, is as the flower of the field*; If all things we have be but a flower, and we our selves but grasse, then, we are taken away as all other things; for flowers and grasse are alike easily taken away.

And are cut off as the tops of the eares of Corn.

The original word is often used to expresse that act which was the signe of the Covenant between God and his people from the time of *Abraham* untill Christ, namely, Circumcision or the cutting off of the foreskin of the flesh, and it is applyed not only to the corporall but spirituall Circumcision, to the Circumcision of the heart in the Spirit. Here it is applyed either to the common way of cutting off *by death*, or to a cutting off by Judgment, both which may be comprehended under the following similitude; *They are cut off*

מול *circumcidit secuit, præcidit, de præputio carnis vel cordis dicitur.*

As the tops of the eares of Corne.

The Hebrew is, *as the heads of the eares of Corne*, that is, *as the eares of corne which grow upon the top of the straw.* Where (by the way) the reader may take notice, that the word which we render; *Eares of Corne*, is that hard word which cost the lives of so many *Ephraimites* (Judg. 12. 6.) Every man that escaped *was bid say Shibboleth, and he said Sibboleth, for he could not frame to pronounce it right; Then they tooke him and slew him.* The *Gileadites* cut off all those *Ephraimites* who could not rightly pronounce this word, that signifies *eares of Corne*; And here *Job* saith that all wicked men *are cut off as the tops of the eares of Corne.*

Summitas vel caput spicatum pro ipsis spicis natis in summitate & capite calami.

The similitude (as some expound it) sets forth nothing else but the fairnesse and easiness of the death of wicked men, as hath been shewed before; *They are cut off as the tops of the eares of corne*, that is, they die as corn when it is fully ripe, at a full age. Thus *Eliphaz* spake to *Job* by way of promise in case of his returne to God. (*Chap.* 5. 26.) *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corne cometh in his season.* But *to be cut off like the tops of the eares of corne*, seemes rather to imply a violent death, and sounds much more like a Threatning then a promise. Therefore First, To be *cut off like the tops of the eares of corn*, shewes how easily wicked men may be cut off by death or Judgement, rather then

then the eaſines of their death, when they are cut off. How quickly may an eare of corne be cut off? wicked men who ſeeme as ſtrong as oakes, ſhall be cut off like ſtrawes.

Secondly, It ſhewes that wicked men are uſually cut off by a violent death, eares of corne are cut off by the reapers ſickle, they doe not fall off alone: and though a wicked man dye a naturall death, yet there is a violence in it; he is *cut off* when he dyeth in his bed as well as when he dyeth upon the block; a naturall death, is a kinde of violent death to every man who is unwilling to dye. Such a man doth not reſigne up his ſoule into the hand of God, but his ſoule is rent and raviſhed from him. Chriſt ſaith of the rich man, though dying in his bed (for ſo the parable is to be underſtood, *Luk.* 12. 20.) *Thou foole, this night thy ſoule ſhall be required of thee, or this night doe they require thy ſoule from thee.* It may be queſtioned, who ſhall require it? he doth not meane, that murtherers ſhould kill him, but that when he dyed his ſoule ſhould rather be taken by force, then quietly ſurrendred.

Thirdly, *He ſhall be cut off as the heads or tops of the eares of corn*, may note his deſtruction when fulleſt and higheſt. For as the eares of corne are better then the ſtraw (what is the ſtraw to the eare?) ſo there be ſome eares of corne that be *head or chiefe eares*; ſo that to ſay wicked men ſhall *be cut off as the heads of the eares of corne*, is to ſay they ſhall be cut off in their fulneſſe, in their hight and glory. When the wicked are not only eares, but heads of the eares of corne, when they are at the higheſt, they ſhall dye; and this reſemblance holds not onely becauſe ſome eares are head-eares, fuller and higher then others, but becauſe all corne is cut, when once it comes to a head, that is, to a perfect fullneſſe.

Fourthly, To be *cut off as the tops of the eares of corn*, may alſo ſignifie that there is a ſpecial time or ſeaſon, when wicked men are to be cut off. For as corn is not alwayes ripe for the ſickle, ſo wicked men (though they alwayes deſerve, yet) are not alwayes ripe for Judgment; Corne is not cut down when greene, or when grown high, but when it is ripe & fit for the flail, it is cut in its ſeaſon; wicked men ſhall be cut off in their ſeaſon. And as there is a generall ſeaſon for the harveſt of the whole world, ſo for every man in particular. (*Rev.* 14. 15.) *Thruſt in thy ſickle & reap, for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harveſt of the earth is ripe.* God will not command the Angel to put in his ſickle till the world be ripe

ripe for Judgment, as he ſpake alſo by the Prophet *Joel* (Ch. 3. 13, 14.) *Put in thy ſickle for the harveſt is ripe, come get you downe for the preſſe is full, the fats overflow, for their wickednes is great. multitudes, multitudes in the valley of deciſion, for the day of the Lord is neere, in the valley of deciſion*; that is, in the valley of cutting down, or of cutting off; or as we put in the Margin, *in the valley of concision or threſhing*; When the wicked ſhall be *cut off as the tops of the eares of corne*, by the ſickle of divine wrath, and be under dreadful breakings and threſhings for evermore.

Laſtly, This cutting off *as the tops of the eares of corne*, ſhewes that God doth not cut off wicked men when he hath them at an advantage, when they are weake, when they are low, but when they are as the *tops of the ears of corn*, when they are at their beſt, then he doth it; the chiefe of the people are called *the heads of the people*, (Numb. 25. 4.) *hang up the heads of the people before me*, ſaith God, by *Moſes*, he cut them off who were as the heads of the eares of corne. As ſome Tyrants for fear, So God in Juſtice cuts off the heads of the people, the chiefe of Families, Princes, and great men. This was Elegantly, though cruelly, expreſſed by *Tarquin the proud*, the laſt King of the *Romanes*, who when a City was taken, or ſurrendred, and application was made to him how he would have the Citizens dealt with, he anſwered, only by a ſigne, calling the Meſſengers into a garden, and having a ſticke in his hand, he ſtruck off the heads of the poppyes, intimating to them, that now the Citizens were in their power, they ſhould cut off all the chiefe and leading men among them: Thus the Lord cuts off the heads of the eares of corne, the chiefe of men, or men of greateſt power, in the greatneſſe of their power, he cuts them off in love to juſtice and righteouſneſſe, as tyrants do in fear and jealouſie of their power and greatneſſe. They are cut off as the tops of the eares of corne.

Sum a popa-verum capita decuſſit, ut ſignificaret principes civitatis paulatim eſſe tollendos. Flor: de Geſt: Rom: cap. 7.

Job having at large deſcribed the ſtate of wicked men, and exemplified many of their wickednеſſes, concludes by way of challenge.

Verſ. 25. *And if it be not ſo, who will make me a liar, and make my ſpeech nothing worth.*

In this verſe we have *Job* triumphing, and yet not ſo much *Job* triumphing, as truth triumphing; for how much ſoever we ſpeak for

Non timet veritas falsitatis insidias sed vel pressa tandem triumphat. Augustin. Serm. de Sanct.

for and defend the truth, it is not comely that our selves should triumph, but the truth only. *Job* indeed shewes his confidence in the equity of his cause, which he affirmes so just and so fully proved to be the mind of God, that he dares venture upon the Judgment of any man alive.

If it be not so now, who will make me a liar?

Prudissime in Hebræo, Estius.

Some make other men liars, by teaching them or encouraging them to tell lies, others make men liars by proving that they have taught or told lyes; This is *Jobs* meaning when he saith, *who will make me a liar?* We may suppose *Job* at the close of his speech rising up and looking about him, while he spake thus, *who will make me a liar?* Let me see the man stand forth that hath any thing to object against what I have said. The words are elegant in the Original, *and if not*, that is, *if it be not so* as I have asserted concerning the dealings of God with wicked men, that they many times flourish and continue flourishing a long time, if it be not so, let any man disprove me, *and make me a liar*, if he can, let him convince me that I am in an errour if he can. As if he had said, I doe not impose my opinion upon you, but submit it to the consideration and discussion of all men.

Hence note.

First, *We should freely offer our opinions and assertions to the tryall.*

'Tis too much for a man to look that what he hath said should be consented unto and beleeved, because *he hath said it.* Onely God himselfe is worthy and may demand, to be thus beleeved by man. That God saith this or that is enough to perswade, yea to require our faith in it, and obedience to it. When God speakes, *he that hath eares to heare, let him heare* (Matth. 13. 9) that is, let him beleeve and obey, at his perill be it. He that is truth cannot but speake truth, and therefore is to be beleeved in whatsoever he speaketh. Man ought not to say any thing as questioning the verity of what God hath said, But we ought to consider what men say, and not to beleeve beyond what we have tryed. And as no man ought to beleeve before he hath tryed, so every man ought to present what he hath said to the tryall. Man hath no dominion over the faith of another; *Paul* professed he had not (2 *Cor.* 1. 24.) and if *Paul* had not who hath? dares any man pretend to a higher priviledge then *Paul* himselfe did? We may not bind up the consciences of men to our dictates any further then what we say is grounded upon and answerable to the sayings of God. To the Law and to the Testimony, if we speake not according to this word, ye have leave or may take leave to say (as to that saying) there is no light in us (*Is.* 8. 20.) We must not teach magisterially, but ministerially, we must not affect *to be called Masters, for one is our Master even Christ* (Mat. 23. 10.) *The Bereans received the word with all readinesse of mind*, yet they did not swallow down all whole that was said to them, but *searched the Scriptures dayly whether those things were so* (Act. 17. 11.) The Apostles rule is suitable to their practice (1 *Thes.* 5. 21.) *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.* Now as it is the duty of hearers and learners to hold nothing till they have proved it, so it is the duty of Teachers to offer every doctrine to the ballance or tryall which they desire others should hold.

Secondly, While *Job* doth thus confidently offer his assertion to tryall; We learne, That

Truth is not afraid to be tryed.

Truth often lieth in a corner, but truth doth not seek corners, truth never hides her head, as ashamed to be seen or discussed by men. Truth (as some have sayd) lyeth in a deepe pit, it is hard to finde it out, it lyeth out of sight, yet truth it doth not hide it self, but dares stand forth in the face of all the world; truth no more feares the tryall, then pure gold feares the touch-stone, or then a schollar who hath made good progresse in his learning, feares to be examined; *He that hath truth with him needs not care who appeares against him.*

Thirdly, In that he saith, *if it be not so now, who will make me a liar?*

Note.

False doctrine is a lye.

(Isa. 9. 15.) *The antient, and the honourable he is the head, the Prophet that teacheth lies*, that is, (the Prophet that teacheth false doctrine) *he is the tayl.* (Jer. 9. 3.) *They bend their tongues like their bowes for lies, but they are not valiant for the truth on the earth.*

The

The Prophet (as I conceive) intends not so much falshood in discourse, which we call *telling a lye*, as falshood of doctrine, which we call *teaching of lyes*. *They bend their tongues (as bows) for lies*, that is, they set themselves to the maintaining of false doctrine to the utmost stretch of their wit and words. Againe, saith the Lord (*Jer.* 14. 14.) *The Prophets that prophecy lyes in my name, I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them, they prophecy unto you a false divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.* The whole doctrine of the man of sin is called *a lye*. *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, therefore God gave them up to strong delusion that they should believe a lye* (2 Thes. 2. 11.) All the faith devouring and conscience wasting errors that ever the man of sin vented to the world, are wrapt up in this *one syllable*, or *word, a lye*. He that receiveth a lye that is told, wrongeth others by it, but he that received a lye that is taught wrongeth himselfe most by it. To tell a lye is very sinfull, but to teach a lye, is much more sinful. The evill of that sin is greatest which spreadeth furthest, & continueth longest. A lye that is told and received sticketh not long in the memory, but passeth away for the most part like a tale that is told, and it is enough to many a man that telleth a lye, if he be beleeved but a little while; But a lye that is taught and received sticketh long in the understanding, and abideth there like a nayle fastened by the Masters of the assemblies, and it is not enough to him that teacheth a lye, unlesse it be beleeved for ever.

Thirdly, When *Job* saith, *Who will make me a liar?* Note.

The worst thing that can be proved against any man, is, that he is a liar.

To be a lyar is to be as bad as may be; For it is to be as bad as the Devill; He deceived the woman both by telling and teaching a lye (*Gen.* 3.) *He abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him, when he speaketh a lye he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it* (Joh. 8. 44.) Every sin is of the Devill, both by temptation and approbation, but only some sins are of the Devill by way of practice, and the sin which is chiefly of him by practice is lying. Now, every sin the more congeniall it is to the Devill

Devill, the more sinfull and abominable it is. And therefore among those who shall be without, *lye-makers* are chiefe (*Rev.* 22. 15.) *Without are doggs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lye.* The universality of this exclusion is onely expressed upon lyars, as if he had sayd, *to be sure all lyars shall be without.* He that maketh a lye hath nothing worse to make; and he that maketh (that is, proveth) a man to be a lyar, hath nothing worse to make of him.

And make my speech nothing worth:

The Hebrew is, *And bring my speech to nothing*; as if he had sayd, I challenge all men to disprove my reasons, or to prove that my reasons are not a proofe of that for which I brought them. In briefe, let any man refute or confute what I have sayd, if he can, and then let all that I have sayd goe for nothing, or be counted nothing worth.

לאל idē quod לאלא Graci benè interpretantur ἐσσὰ λόγον, verbum è verbo, in nom.

Hence note.

Unsound doctrine is worthlesse doctrine.

The speech of a lyar is nothing worth, sound doctrine is of great value, it is worth thousands. *David* preferr'd the word of God before thousands of Gold, and silver; every holy truth is the word of God eyther formally or vertually, eyther in termes or by consequence. The Apostle compares sound doctrine to things of greatest worth, even to Gold, silver, and precious stones, and in the same place (1 *Cor.* 3. 12.) he compares unsound doctrine or doctrine unsutable to the foundation (which is Jesus Christ alone) to wood, hay, stubble, which as they are things in their owne nature unconsiderable & worthlesse in comparison of Gold, silver, and precious stones, so, as to the busines upon which he there treates (a suitable *building upon Christ*) they are altogether worthlesse. And if those doctrines, which (because of some errour in them) are unsutable to the foundation, are to be accounted but *wood, hay, and stubble*, how worthlesse are those doctrines, which (being altogether erroneous) are inconsistent with and quite overthrow the foundation. Such doctrines are worthy of nothing but a dung-hill, being themselves nothing but drosse and dung. What is that worth to us, which is useless to us? How worthlesse then is that which is destructive to us? Every error is a Bable, a

rhing of no uſe, ſome errors are as poyſon, deadly in their uſe; The Apoſtle *Peter* doth not ſpare to ſay as much of them (2 *Epiſt.* 2. 1, 2.) while he calleth them *damnable hereſies, which bring ſwift deſtruction on the bringers of them in,* or the broachers of them abroad; And if they bring deſtruction upon thoſe who bring them, they that receave them cannot be ſafe.

To conclude this poynt and Chapter, if erroneous doctrine be nothing worth, what are thoſe Bookes worth, which are full of erroneous doctrines? To print ſuch Bookes is but waſt of paines and paper, and when ſuch Bookes are printed the beſt improvement that can be made of them, is to make them waſt paper. To buy them is waſt of money, and to read them, is (to moſt) but waſt of time. That ſpeech is not worth the hearing, nor is that booke worth the reading, which (as all erroneous books and ſpeeches are) is nothing worth. *Job* granted, that if any could make him a lyar, they, with the ſame paines, muſt needs make *his ſpeech nothing worth.* Upon this iſſue he ſhuts up his diſcourſe in anſwer to *Eliphaz,* nor durſt *Eliphaz* undertake him any more upon that iſſue, and therefore layeth downe the Bucklers and quits the feild; yet *Bildad* takes them up and makes a ſhort skirmiſh with *Job*; but upon another poynt, as will appeare in the following Chapter.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 25. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Then anſwered Bildad the Shuhite, and ſaid,
Dominion and feare are with him, he maketh peace in high places.
Is there any number of his Armies? and upon whom doth not his light ariſe?

THis ſhort Chapter containes *Bildads* third conteſt with *Job*; in which quite waving the poynt in Queſtion concerning the preſent troubles of the righteous, and the felicity of the wicked, he falls, firſt, into a deſcription of the glory, power, and Majeſty of God; ſecondly, by way of oppoſition and compariſon he ſets forth the miſery and impurity of man. For whereas in the 23d Chapter, verſe the 3d, *Job* appealed unto heaven, wiſhing that he might have Admittance to God himſelfe, and plead his cauſe in his preſence; *O that I knew where I might finde him! that I might come even to his ſeate! I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments*; *Bildad* perceiving him thus confident, labours to take him off by ſetting before him the greatnes, and dreadfulneſſe of the Lord. He takes up the ſame argument upon which he had formerly inſiſted; wonderfully exalting the Majeſty of God, and debaſing man in the ſight of his owne fraylety This is the ſumme and ſcope of the whole Chapter.

Bildad itaque dei potentiam & altitudinem expendit ut Jobum cõprimat, ne divinã Majeſtatem appellet, ſuamq; coram judice tanto innocentiam jactet.

Verſ. 1, 2. *Then Bildad the Shuhite, anſwered and ſaid, Dominion and feare are with him.*

With whom is not expreſt, though it be the beginning of a ſpeech. God is often ſpoken of in Scripture without naming. The glorious things which are attributed unto him will fit & ſute none but himſelfe. Barely to ſay ſome things are done, is as much as to

say, they are done by God, because none but God can doe such things. And as such things may be named as can be done onely by God, so such things may be named as can belong to none, but God. As here *dominion and feare are with him*; that is, with God. For these can belong to none but God. And because these are proper and peculiar unto God, therefore *Bildad* seemes to say thus to *Job*; *Surely thou hast not yet considered (as thou ought est) the soveraigne authority and power of God, which must needs strike thee with an awfull reverence of him, and cause thee to know thy owne distance better. Surely thou dost not mind, that, Dominion and feare are with God, and that thou thy selfe art but dust and ashes, yea impure and polluted dust and ashes.*

Unum hoc agit ut demonstret Jobi desiderium conveniendi deum esse temerarium. Coc.

Thus *Bildad* seemes to chide and rebuke the forwardnesse of *Job* in appealing and putting his cause to God; as if he had been over-bold with God, while he desired right of him against the unrighteous accusations of men. Or as if he had forgotten the soveraignty of God, while he was earnestly begging that he would doe him Justice.

Dominion and feare are with him.

משל *Notat efficax exercitium potestatis.*

Dominion, is that supreame power that God exerciseth over all things and persons. The Hebrew is strictly rendred thus; *To rule is his*; wee say, *Dominion is with him.* There are three things which we may comprehend under the dominion of God.

First, His strength and mighty power, whereby *he is able to subdue all things unto himselfe*; as the Apostle speakes (*Phil.* 1. 21)

Secondly, His authority, whereby he hath a right to doe whatsoever he doth. (*Dan.* 4. 35.)

Thirdly, His Efficiency, or the efficacy of his power, whereby he is able to cary every thing through to the desired issue (*Isa.* 43. 13.) Many have great power, & great authority, who yet want this efficacy & efficiency, they may undertake much, but they cannot carry it through; whereas in God there is a concurrence of these three, strength, authority, and efficacy, to bring to passe what ever himselfe intendeth, or is pleased to doe. The Dominion which *Bildad* here ascribes unto God, is a dominion cloathed with these three excellencies. From the scope of *Bildad*, representing God in his dominion and greatnesse.

Observe.

Observe.

The best way to humble man is to set the power and soveraignty of God, as also his holinesse and infinite purity before him.

Any of the perfections of God taken in by faith and well meditated upon, may lay the heart of man low. How doth all our bravery and the high conceits which we have of our selves vanish like smoke and become a meere nothing at the appearances of God? Though (as the Apostle speakes, 2 *Cor.* 10. 12.) *we measuring our selves by our selves, and comparing our selves amongst our selves are not wise*; Yet while we onely doe so we seeme very wise; But when once we compare our selves with God, O what ideots and poore simple things are we. What is our power when once we contemplate the power of God? What is the dominion which any Prince of the earth hath when once he considers the dominion and soveraignty of God? What is the wisdome of man, what the holinesse of man, to the wisdome and holinesse of God?

Dominion and feare are with him.

More particularly, in that Dominion is here appropriated to God.

Observe.

Supreame power is proper unto God.

There is a dominion put into the hands of men: many have dominion and power, but originally all Dominion is Gods. In him is the seate and roote of power. *David* saith (*Psal.* 62. 11.) *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard it, that power belongeth unto God.* As my eare hath heard, so my heart hath heard and consented to this truth. And this power or dominion of God may be considered foure wayes.

First, In the universality of it, (1 *Chron.* 29. 12.) where *David* makes this confession; *Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand is to make great and to give strength unto all.* He that giveth strength unto all, hath strength over all, and his dominion is over all nations and persons, not limited to this or that particular nation or person; yea he hath dominion not onely over all here below; but in heaven above; as *Bildad* speakes a little after; *He maketh*

peace

peace in his high places. Chriſt is *Prince of the Kings of the earth* (Rev: 1.5.) *He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings* (Rev. 19.16.) that is, not onely a King or a Lord, excelling all other Kings and Lords, but alſo ruling them, or reigning over them: Kings are his Subjects.

Secondly, His is an abſolute dominion, that is, he governes by no law, but by his owne will: this kinde of dominion is proper unto God alone. He doth and he onely may governe by his owne will. *He doth in heaven and earth what ever pleaſeth him.* This was ſpoken of (*Job* 23. 13.) *He is in one minde, and who can turne him? and what his ſoule deſireth that he doth.* He doth not goe out of himſelfe for his rule, his owne deſire is his rule, all the deſires of God are holy, juſt, and righteous, and therefore his deſire and will may well be his rule. It is good that he ſhould have an abſolute dominion, and rule according to his owne will, who cannot will any thing, but what is good. And 'tis but juſt that he ſhould rule as he pleaſeth, who cannot be pleaſed with any thing but what is juſt.

Thirdly, His is an everlaſting dominion (*Pſal.* 145. 13. *Pſal.* 66. 7.) As men are mortall, ſo are States, Kingdomes, and Empires. The ſtrongeſt and greateſt of them have had their fates and funerals. Wee ſee what changes there have been of dominion and power out of one hand into another; but the dominion of God is ſubject to no change, nor knoweth it any fate. *The Babylonian, the Perſian, the Grecian, and the Roman Monarchyes have ſeene their day*; but the dominion of Jeſus Chriſt is an everlaſting dominion (*Dan.* 4. 34.) 'tis ſo acknowledged even by *Nebuchadnezzar. And at the end of the dayes I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine underſtanding returned unto mee, and I bleſſed the moſt high, and I praiſed and honoured him that liveth for ever, whoſe dominion is an everlaſting dominion, and his Kingdome is from generation to generation.*

Fourthly, His is an Effectuall Dominion. As he hath a right to doe what he will, ſo he hath ſtrength to effect what he willeth. Such is the dominion of God, and becauſe it is ſuch, even an univerſall, abſolute, everlaſting and effectuall Dominion. Therefore, let man remember his duty.

Dominion calleth for ſubjection.

That's the Apoſtles rule (*Rom:* 13. 1.) *Let every ſoule be ſubject*

ject unto the higher powers: and if every ſoule ought to be ſubject unto the higher powers among men: then every ſoule ought to be ſubject, much more to the power of God, for his is the *higheſt power.* And thus we ought to ſubmit.

Firſt, Unto his lawes; *Legiſlative power is his*, what God ſayth muſt be our rule. We may not diſpute, much leſſe quarrell at any of his commands, but obey them: naturally the heart of man rebells againſt the law of God (*Rom.* 8. 7.) *The carnall minde is enmity againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*; that is, it cannot be ſubject, while it remaineth carnal; onely a renewed or a ſpirituall minde ſubmits to a ſpirituall law.

Secondly, Submit to his workes, to what he doth, as well as to what he ſaith; and that, firſt, in the proviſion and allowances that he makes for you, that is a part of Gods dominion to cut out a portion for every man. Therefore in every eſtate be content; ſecondly, ſubmit to the works of God in his afflictions, and chaſtiſements (1 *Pe.* 5. 6) *Humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.* When old *Eli* heard that terrible meſſage concerning the deſtruction of his whole family (for *Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him*) *he ſaid, It is the Lord; let him doe what ſeemeth him good* (1 Sam. 3. 18.) Thus the Church ſate downe in ſilence not ſpeaking a word becauſe it was the act of God (*Lam.* 3. 28.) Thirdly ſubmit to God in the whole compaſſe of his Government, in ordering the affaires of the whole world, when he breaks, and when he builds, when he ſets up, and when he pulls downe, when he makes peace, and when he makes warre, in all theſe acts of dominion ſubmit to God. When the Prophet calls us to behold what deſolations the Lord maketh in the earth, he adds this word as from the Lord, *Be ſtill and know that I am God* (Pſal. 46. 10.) As if the Lord had ſaid, Let none queſtion me for what I have done, *I am God*, and if ye know, indeed, *that I am*, ye will not have a word to ſay againſt *what I doe.* So (*Zech:* 2. 13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord; for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*: He is riſen to make great changes, therefore be ſilent, ſubmit, let there be no murmuring at, no contending with his providences; *for dominion and feare are with him.*

Some render this word *feare*, as an adjunct or Epithete of the former;

Dominatus & quidem formidabilis est penes illum. Jun.

former; *Dominion and that a terrible feareſull or formodable dominion is with him*, but rather diſtinctly as wee, *Dominion and feare are with him.* God hath no feare in him, nor upon him, for he is as infinitely above all feare, as he is above hope. But *feare is with him*, or, *feare is his*, becauſe he is ſo much to be feared. *Feare is with God* upon this threefold account.

First, Becauſe many at preſent doe feare the Lord: every Godly man is a man fearing God.

Secondly, Becauſe every man ought to feare, dread; and ſtand in awe of God, even the Princes and powers and dominions of the earth, ought to feare the Lord. (*Pſal.* 2. 11,) *Be wiſe now therefore O ye Kings; be inſtructed, O ye Judges of the earth, ſerve the Lord with feare, and rejoyce with trembling.* Kings and Judges muſt ſerve and feare the Lord, or ſerve the Lord with feare. Who then muſt not?

Thirdly, *Feare is with him*; becauſe all ſhall feare and dread him at laſt, whether they will or no, they whoſe proud hearts ſtout it againſt God, they that goe on impudently in ſinne, feareleſſe of the Majeſty and wrath of God, yet a time will come when their ſtomacks ſhall be taken downe; a time will come when all the world ſhall tremble before the Lord. As now, many doe it, and as all ought to doe, ſo all ſhall doe it. (*Iſa.* 2. 19.) *They ſhall goe into the holes of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for feare of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty; when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* Such a day is coming upon the lofty ones, upon the Cedars and upon the Oakes, upon the feareleſſe, and they ſhall feare; and (which is the greateſt argument of feare) run into a hole for feare. It is prophecyed (*Revel.* 6 15.) That, *the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man ſhall hide themſelves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountaines, and ſay to the rocks and to the mountaines fall on us and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe.* They who having been threatned with the wrath of God, were no more afraid then the rocks, ſhall, for feare, wooe the rocks to hide them from the wrath of God. Though *Adam* had not the feare of God to keepe him from ſinne, yet the feare of God fell upon him as ſoone as he had

had ſinned. (*Gen.* 3. 10.) *I heard thy voyce in the Garden and I was afraid, becauſe I was naked and I hid my ſelf.*

Hence Obſerve.

First, *God is in himſelfe very dreadfull, he is to be feared.*

God is ſo much to be feared, that not only *feare is with him*, but *he is feare.* As becauſe God is ſo full of love, therefore the Scripture predicates love directly of God, *God is love* (1 Joh. 4 8.) ſo becauſe God is greatly to be feared, therefore he is called *feare* (Gen. 31. 42. 53.) *Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the feare of Iſaack* (that is, the God whom my father *Iſaac* feared) *had been with me, ſurely thou hadſt ſent me away empty*, ſayd *Jacob* in his conteſt with *Laban.* And at the 53d verſe of the ſame Chapter he ſaith again to *Laban*; *the God of Abraham, and the God of Nabor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us: and Jacob ſware by the feare of his father Iſaac*; that is, he ſware by God; for by him only can we ſweare in a holy manner, An oath being a part or an act of divine worſhip. The dominion and feare of God are put together (*Mal.* 1. 14. *I am a great King* (there is dominion) *and my name is dreadfull among the Heathen* (there is fear.) Even Heathens who know God only by the light of nature, (which is ſo imperfect a way of knowing God, that the Heathen are ſaid *not to know him*, Jer. 10 25. yet I ſay, the Heathen who know God onely thus) doe feare him; they fear him in proportion to or according to the way of their knowledge of him. How much more then is the Lord to be feared, and how dreadfull is he to and among his own people, who know him ſavingly, who know him by Goſpel light. *God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of the Saints: and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him* (Pſal. 89. 7.) He is terribly dreadfull amongſt the Heathen, he is awfully or reverentially dreadfull amongſt the Saints. *Fear is with him.*

First, In reference to the greatneſſe of his power; conſider what God can doe, and that renders him dreadfull. We feare thoſe that can doe great things, thoſe eſpecially that can do great things againſt us. For this reaſon Chriſt exhorts his Diſciples to fear God, when he ſaw them in danger of a ſurpriſal by the feare of what men could doe againſt them (*Luke* 12. 4, 5.) *I ſay unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can doe. But I will forewarn you*

whom ye shall fear; fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him. How is he to be feared, who at one stroake can pierce body and soule quite through, and throw both into hell? The Lord is to be feared upon the consideration of the ordinary providentiall puttings forth of his power, how much more when he puts forth his power extraordinarily and Judicially? (*Jer.* 5. 22.) *Feare ye not me, sayth the Lord? will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot passe it, and though the waves thereof tosse themselves, yet can they not prevaile, though they roare, yet can they not passe over it?* I have done this thing, put a stop to the Sea, I have put a bridle into the mouth of the Sea, I can check the waves when they roare and tosse, and will ye not feare me?

Secondly, God is to be feared for his goodnesse, as we read at the 24th verse of the same Chapter, where the Lord upbraids their want of fear, while they remembred his most ordinary good providences at land; *Neither say they in their heart, let us now feare the Lord our God, that giveth raine, both the former and the latter in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weekes of the harvest.* If God be to be feared for that witnesse of his goodnesse which is held out by raine and fruitfull seasons, or by filling the hearts of men in common with food and gladnes, then how much more is God to be feared for the distinguishing acts of his goodnes and mercy, the pardon of sin, and the giving out of his Spirit. *There is forgivenesse with thee, that thou mayst be feared,* sayd the Psalmist (130. 4.) and (*Hos.* 3. 5.) *They shall fear the Lord and his goodnesse in the latter dayes;* that is, they shall fear the Lord becaus of his goodnes, his special goodnes to his Church and people, in advancing them to all their spirituall liberties & priviledges in the latter dayes. And thus the Lord is said to be not only *glorious in holinesse*, but *fearful in praises*; because we should feare him, when we are praising him, both because he hath wrought so much goodnesse and mercy for those who are unworthy, as also lest while we receive so much from the hand of his goodnesse and mercy, we should walke unworthily.

Secondly, When the text saith, *Fear is with him*, we learne, That

God can strike man with feare when he pleaseth.

Power

Power is with him, and he can put forth his power: if God send out his power, it goeth and prevaileth. So *feare is with him*, and he can send out his feare to strike whom he will with feare, when and as oft as he will. The Scripture sheweth the Lord sending forth his feare at pleasure, and attaching the strongest and hardyest of the children of men. It is sayd (*Gen.* 35 5.) *And they journeyed* (that is, *Jacob* and his small company) *and the terrour of God was upon the Cities that were round about them and they did not pursue after the Sons of Jacob.* The terrour of God was sent out to keepe them in, so that none of them stirred. Else no doubt but all the Cities would have pursued them because of that high provocation which the sons of *Jacob* had given them by the late slaughter of the *Sichemites*. When God promised to send Hornets before the people of *Israel* to drive out the uncircumcised Nations, this feare was the Hornet (*Exod.* 23. 28.) God stung their hearts with feare, or (as it were by Hornets) buzz'd a fear into their eares, as he did into the eares of the *Syrians*, who encamped before *Samaria* (2 King. 7 6, 7.) *The Lord made the host of the Syrians to hear a noyse of Chariots, and a noyse of Horses, even the noyse of a great host: and they said one to another, loe the King of Israel hath hired against us the Kings of the Hittites, and the Kings of the Egyptians to come upon us Wherefore they arose, and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the campe as it was, and fled for their life.* As a word from God makes the heart confident and bold in the greatest danger, so a word from God makes the heart fearefull and cowardly, where there is no danger at all. This is the glory of God, that he can command our passions. *That by a word he can make them fear, who doe not at all fear his word.*

Many men have fear belonging to them, yet they cannot send out their feare, they are in great place, and so both dominion over men, and feare are with them (for unto whomsoever dominion belongs, fear doth belong (*Rom.* 13. 7.) *Render to every man his due, tribute to whom tribute is due, custome to whom custome. feare to whom feare, honour to whom honour.* Yet (I say) many have dominion and fear belonging unto them, who cannot send out their feare. Their power is despised, and none regards them; they command, and are not obeyed, they promise and are not beleeved, they threaten and are not feared. Onely God can send

out his feare, and make every man fall and tremble before him When many armed men came to take Christ, Christ sent out a feare upon them. so that *they went backward and fell to the ground* (*Joh.* 18. 6) Christ gave them never an angry word, he only confessed himselfe to be the man they sought for, *I am he*; and they were as men astonished with feare; Christ in speaking those words did only let out a little ray or beame of his Diety, and this struck them down. O what fear will Christ send out when he cometh to judge the world, who could send forth such a feare, while he yeelded himselfe up to be judged and condemned by the world. *Dominion and feare are with him.* He can make all afraid, and yet, as it followeth,

He maketh peace in his high places.

This latter part of the verse, is a continued description of the irresistible power of God (as all agree) in making peace, yet there is some difference what should be meant *by the high places*, where *God maketh peace*; *He maketh peace in his high places.*

First, Many understand these *high places*, to be *the Heavens*, or (as the Scripture speaketh) *the Host of Heaven*, Sunne, Moon, and Starres; There or among them peace is made through the power of God, keeping them in or to order, that is, in their dueft motions. The heavenly bodies are in continuall strong motion, and they are kept in their motion by the power of God. The Sunne, Moone, and Starres, are mighty bodies, and they are in a perpetual *career*, yet they justle not one against another, nor doe they fall fowle upon one another. In this sence it may be said; that God maketh peace among them; They all according to his appoyntment keepe their places, and stirre not out of their owne spheares No man could ever keepe his Watch or Clock in such order as God keepes the Sunne.

Secondly, By these *high places*, others understand that which is somewhat lower; not Sunne, Moone, and Starres, but the severall regions of the ayre; God makes peace in those high places, where stormes and tempests and all manner of fiery impressions are bred and wrought. Naturalists say, that the second region of the ayre is both the shop where those dreadfull instruments of warre, Thunder, lightning, hayle, snow, are formed, as also the store-house where they are layd up; yet even in those high places, God

God maketh peace. If he speake to the thunder, it doth not stirre, and to the lightning, it doth not goe forth, if he speake to the winde it bloweth not, and to the storme it is hush't and quiet. *Fire and hayle snow and vap ur stormy winde and tempest, fulfill his word* (Psal. 148. 8.) And they fulfill it whether in going or in staying. Thus God maketh peace in the high places of the ayre. and upon the high waves of the Sea. Christ did but rebuke the Sea, and say to it (when it was in its feirceft rage) *peace, be still, and there was a great calme* (Mark 4. 39.) The ayre is under the Empire of God as much as Sea or Land; And he *maketh peace in those high places.*

Deus vel. jobi nutu tranquillat elementorum dissidia tempestates sedat.

Thirdly, The words are expounded of those high places which are the more proper seates of Angels, And so God may be said to make peace in his places because he maketh peace among the Angels, that is, he keepeth the Angels in peace; The Angels doe not contend one with another, and none of them dares contend with God. Some urge this exposition as most pertinent to *Bildads* purpose for the conviction of *Job*; As if he had said, The Angels dare not contend with God, And doest thou (O *Job*) contend with God? The Angels utter not a word against God, and darest thou undertake to plead with him, and engage him in a controversie?

His verbis veltitur Job quasi insolens sciat se ossa sy quomodo lus homo. Pererius.

A fourth sort, by Gods *making peace in his high places*, understand only thus much, That all is quiet in Heaven, or that God hath a most peaceable and quiet fruition, and enjoyment of himselfe; He hath had it from eternity, and will have it unto eternity, this is the blessednesse of God, he is above all trouble and disturbment. And thus also *Bildad* seems to reprove *Job*, *Wilt thou begin a contest with God, wilt thou trouble God himself, who maketh peace in his high places, who lives in everlasting rest and quiet. God doth not use to be sued and pleaded with as thou seemest overboldly to desire.*

Lastly, These *high places* are expounded for the high places of the earth; As if he had said, God makes peace amongst the States, Princes, and powers of the world, who are in high places, and in Gods high places, For every throne is Gods, and thrones are high places. As the heavens are high places in comparison of the whole earth, so some places of the earth (in a civil capacity as well as in a natural) are higher then the rest. Now among those that

ar-

are in his high places of power and authority, the Lord maketh peace, and this is a very glorious worke of God. Thus we see there are many high places, and they are all the high places of God; yet I conceive that *Bildad* chiefly if not onely aymes at Heaven, which is more peculiarly the high place of God; as being that to which (though many lay claime to the high places of the earth) none besides God ever did make claime or lay title.

Further, Besides these different apprehensions about *the high places*, there is a difference in the reading of the words together; some thus; *He worketh in peace in his high places*; That is, what troubles soever are here on earth, there is peace and quietnesse in heaven, or there God worketh in peace and quietnesse. Others, thus; *The Dominion and fear which are with him make peace in his high places*; As if the dominion and power of God were that to which peace making is ascribed as an effect. Or as if he had said, *God hath authority enough to compose all differences, yea he so orders things in heaven that there ariseth no difference in those high places, his dominion and feare keepe all in peace.* There are no murmurings nor discontents, much lesse any rebellions or open warres in heaven.

Mr. *Broughton* reports the Chaldee translation in a phrase very uncouth in our language *Sultansh peace and feare be with him*, (some Eastern Princes are called *Sultans*) *He maketh peace in his high heavens.* To which he adds the Exposition or glosse of the Chaldee paraphrase; *Michael is on his right hand; and he is of fire; Gabriel is on his left hand; and he is of water; and the heavenly creatures be part of fire and part of water.* But Mr *Broughton* gives a good corrective, *such Fables St Paul forbiddeth.* To conclude, though it be difficult which of the high places before-named are here meant, yet it is a truth that all high places are his high places, and that in what high place soever peace is made, God maketh it. *He maketh peace in his high places.*

Hence observe.

Peace-making is the worke of God.

And as God makes peace every where, so he makes every kind of peace. We find peace spoken of in Scripture in a five-fold opposition; and God the maker of that five-fold peace.

First,

First, He maketh peace in the high places of the world, *as peace is opposed to any kind of trouble, or affliction.* Peace is usually accompanyed with prosperity, and peace signifies any kinde of prosperity. Peace in this extent is assumed by God himselfe as his proper worke (*Isa.* 45. 7.) *I forme the light and create darknesse, I make peace and create evill. I the Lord doe all these things*; that is, I doe them and none can doe them without me, or but by me.

Secondly, God maketh peace as peace is (more strictly) taken in opposition to warre and tumults; *He causeth warre to cease in all the world,* (Psal. 46. 9.) *He maketh warre to cease unto the end of the Earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the speare in sunder, he burneth the Chariots in the fire.* He that destroyeth all the Instruments of warre, doth surely make peace; and he that maketh warre to cease, doth certainly make peace begin. Peace is made two wayes; first, by taking up the differences and reconciling the Spirits of men; secondly, by breaking the power and taking away all provisions of warre from men. The Lord maketh peace by both these wayes, or by either of them.

Thirdly, God maketh peace as peace is opposed to persecution; There may be no warre in a Nation, and yet no peace to the people of God by reason of fore and fiery persecution; yea a generall peace is the very opportunity which persecutors looke for, to breake the peace of particular men. The most bloody times that the Church ever had, have been the most peaceable times of Nations. And when nations are most troubled, then Churches usually get their liberties, and are most quiet. Such a peace as this the Churches had, though I cannot say they had it upon this occasion. (*Acts* 9. 31.) *Then had the Churches rest* (or peace, that is, they were quiet from their cruel persecutors) *throughout all Judea, and Galile, and Samaria, and were edifyed, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost, were multiplyed.* This peace doth God make for his Saints, his little flocke, that they may sometimes lye down in Greene pastures, and beside the *still waters*, without fear of the Wolves and Lions, who would alwayes tear and worry them. Thus the Lord promiseth. (*Isa.* 60. 17, 18.) *I will make thy officers peace, and thine exactours righteousnesse, violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, God maketh peace, as peace is opposed to *dissension* among brethren. It is possible there may be no warre in a place, yea no persecution, none to vex the people of God, and yet they may have great dissentions, vexations, and divisions among themselves. This peace the Church of *Corinth* wanted, when none from without troubled the Church. Hence that rebuke which the Apostle gives them (1 *Cor.* 3. 3.) *Whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnall and walke as men?* Thus Saints and Churches warre one with and trouble another, when the world gives them no trouble at all. To the keeping of this peace Christ admonisheth his Disciples (*Mark* 9. 50) *Have salt in your selves, and peace one with another.* But why did Christ speake thus to his own Disciples; *have peace one with another?* Were they ready to make warre one with another? had they any Armyes to engage and lead out into the field against one another? surely none. Therefore when Christ saith, *have peace one with another*, his meaning was only this, wrangle not with one another, fall not out one with another. The Disciples were not like to run into any other war but that of dissention amongst themselves. And this war may be in those Churches that live in the most peaceable condition. And 'tis God onely who makes peace as in his high places both of heaven and earth, so in his holy places.

Fifthly, and lastly, God makes peace as peace is opposed to disorder, for there may be consent amongst men, and yet much disorder among men, yea they may (possibly) agree, consent and center together in that which is most disorderly. Of this peace the Apostle speakes (1 *Cor.* 14. 33.) *God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all churches of the Saints*, that is, God would have every one keepe his order and his place; He would not have the prophets speak all together in the Church, for that is disorderly; nor would he have women speake at all in the Church, for that also is disorderly. That which breaks order breakes peace, for their can be no true peace without order, and God is not the Author of disorder or confusion in Churches but of peace.

Thus peace making is the work of God in this five-fold opposition as peace is opposed to trouble, as peace is opposed to war, as peace is opposed to persecution, as peace is opposed to dissention, and lastly, as peace is opposed to disorder. To make peace in all

all these kindes, is as much the honour as it is onely in the power of God. *He maketh peace in his high places.*

Secondly, Observe.

Where God is most eminently, there is most peace.

Hee makes peace on the earth, but in his high places where his most glorious appearance is, there is nothing but peace. And as There is nothing but peace in heaven, where God declares himselfe most clearely, so they to whom God declares himselfe most clearely on earth are most for peace: the neerer and the liker wee are unto God, the neerer wee are unto peace, and the more wee like it. All true peace floweth out from God, and the more of a healing and peace-making spirit appeares in any man, the more of God appeares in him.

Lastly, By way of inference; Take this, First,

Seing God makes peace in his high places, or in heaven above, how easily can he (when our breaches are widest) make peace in these low places of the earth. And because, as it is his property, so his promise to doe it, wee should waite upon him for and urge him with the fullfilling of this promise, that he who makes peace alwayes in the high places of heaven, would make that five fold peace in the low places of the earth.

Secondly, Seeing God is able to make peace in all places, he can also make warre in all places. The same power doth both, and *Bildad* shewes the preparations of God for warre as wel as his sanctions of peace. For he hath innumerable Armyes under his command, as it follows in the next verse.

Vers. 3. *Is there any number of his Armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?*

There seemes to be somewhat a strange conjunction between these two verses, *hee maketh peace*, and, *Is there any number of his Armies?* One would thinke wee should heare of nothing but warre, when we heare of such numberlesse armyes. God hath innumerable invincible armyes, alwayes ready for warre, yet he is most ready to make peace: yea he who is *The Lord of Hosts*, is also stiled, *The Lord of peace* (2 Thes. 3. 16.) This likewise speakes the dominion, power, and Majesty of God in that he maketh peace,

and can make warre. *His armyes are at hand*, and those no contemptible ones. As if *Bildad* had thus bespoken *Iob*; *It is in vaine for thee who art a weake man, to thinke of contending with God, who hath numberlesse armyes to take his part against all opposers.*

The word which wee translate *Armyes*, properly signifies *Troopes*. *Is there any number of his troopes?* And this is given in name to one of the Patriarchs (*Gen.* 30 11.) *And Leah sayd, a Troop cometh; And shee called his name Gad.* A troop is a little Army; and a great Army consists of many troopes. Wee say, *Is there any number of his Armies?*

When the Scripture sayth, that God hath armies, it is not to be understood as if God needed them, eyther to protect himselfe, or to suppresse his enemies; *The Lord of hosts* himselfe is infinitely stronger then all the armyes and hosts of which he is Lord. Earthly Princes have their Armyes, and guards, to protect their persons and dominions from danger and invasion. They want armyes to helpe their friends abroad, and to defend their Subjects at home. Worldly Princes borrow power from others to protect themselves, while they undertake to protect others. But God is the guard of his guards, and the strength of his own armyes. Princes are saved by their Armyes, but God is the safety of his armyes. The Gods of the earth are afraid of what man may do unto them, but the God of heaven is not only above those feares, but also above all want of mans doing any thing for him. So that, *as God is not worshipped with mans hands*, (as the Apostle tells The *Athenians*, Act. 17. 25.) *as though he needed any thing*, so neyther is he assisted by mens hands or by any hand, as if he needed any thing, *seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things.*

And therefore when the Lord is sayd to have Armyes, it is eyther to signifie, first, that he hath all things at his command, and is full of power, or secondly, that although he can doe all things by himselfe, yet he will use the agency of the creature to effect his purposes.

This question, *Is there any number of his armyes?* resolves it selfe into this negative, There is no number of his armyes, or, there is no number of them. But what are these armyes of God?

First, The Angells are his armyes: we read of one Angel that destroyed a whole army. (2 *Kings* 19. 35.) *And it came to passe that night, that the Angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the campe*

campe of the Assyrians, an hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, beheld, they were all dead corpses. If one Angel destroyed an army, what cannot an army of Angels doe? The Angels of God are armyes without number. We read them expressed by such great numbers, as render their numbers inexpressible. So in *Daniels* vision of the Glory of God (*Chap.* 7. 10.) *A fiery streame issued, and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministred unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him*; that is, an innumerable company stood before him. Christ sayd to *Peter* when he drew his sword and fought to rescue him from the Officers of the High Priest that came to arrest and bring him to Judgement, *Put up thy sword againe into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my father, and he shall presently give mee more then twelve legions of Angels* (Matth. 26. 53.) Here is an army of Angels. Christ speaketh in the Roman phrase, who reckoned their armyes by legions, as we doe by regiments, *Six thousand six hundred sixty six* was the number of a legion as some affirme, and if so, Then twelve legions make *Seventy nine thousand nine hundred ninety two*; a great Army; but (saith Christ) my father can send *more then twelve legions.* But how many more, no man can say. Christ pitcheth upon a great certaine number, to shew that hee might have what number he would, if hee did but call for them.

Secondly, The Sun, Moone, & Starres, are the Armyes of God. (*Judges* 5. 20.) *They fought from heaven.* That is, the heavenly or aeriall meteors, wind, thunder, hayle, did as it were joyne their confederate forces for the destruction of *Israels* enemies (as they had done before, *Josh.* 10. 11. and as they did afterwards, 1 *Sam.* 7. 10) yea as it followeth in the same place, *the Starres in their courses fought against Sisera.* The Starres charged like an Army in battel array, raysing storme and dreadfull tempests by their influences, and so might be sayd to fight against and ruine the whole army of *Sisera.* By all which Rhetoricall expressions the Spirit would lead us to understand, that the Lord himselfe by invisible powers did fight against *Sisera*, while *Israel* fought him with a visible power. Surely if the Starres be the Lords armyes, wee may well say, *is there any number of his armyes?* When the Lord would shew *Abraham* that his seed should be an innumerable army,

my, *he brought him forth and sayd, looke now towards heaven, and tell the Starres, if thou be able to number them. And he sayd unto him, so shall thy seed be* (Gen. 15. 5.) that is, thy seed shall be numberlesse, as the Starres are numberlesse.

Thirdly, By these Armyes wee may understand, not only the Angells, and the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, that heavenly host, but any creature, yea all the creatures, from the Elephant even to the worme that creepeth upon the ground, or to the fly that buzzeth in the ayre, or to the lice that breede out of corruption. All these are the Armyes of God; and by these he can doe his worke as well as by the Angells in heaven. What were the armyes of God, with which he made warre upon *Pharaoh?* were they not flyes and lice and such like contemptible creatures, mustred together at his command? therefore the Text may well say, *Is there any number of his armies?* God can leavy an army upon the earth, not onely of men, but of beasts, and not onely of Lyons, and Elephants, the stoutest and greatest beasts, but of the weakest and meanest, and not onely of the weakest and meanest among living creatures, but of the very Inanimate creatures, the stones in the feilds, the winds in the ayre, the waters of the Sea, yea the sand of the Sea, and the very dust of the earth are the armyes of God, if hee give them commission and send them forth. God and the weakest creature are an overmatch for the strongest creatures; 'Tis no matter how meane the meanes is, or how inconsiderable the instrument, so it be in the hand of God, so it be of Gods providing, and goe forth at his bidding. God can leavy an army where he will, and out of what he will, and it shall doe the deed. Now if all things or any thing may be his army, no marvayle if it be sayd, *Is there any number of his Armyes?*

Hence observe.

All creatures are the host the Armyes of God.

They may be called his Armyes in a threefold consideration.

First, Because of their multitude, a few cannot make an army. There are many creatures of every kinde, how many then are all of every kinde put together?

Secondly, They are his Armyes, because of their order; The greatest *many* out of order doe not make an Army, but a throng or heape. Armyes are martiall'd and disciplin'd, trayned and taught.

taught. An Army is an ordered company; all the creatures are in order by nature, and when God calls they are in order as it were by Art.

Thirdly, They are his Armyes, because as God hath a power to command them, so they are ready to obey him; They (as the Centurion in the Gospel sayd of his Souldiers) goe when God sayth goe, they come, when he sayth come, and if he bid them doe this or that they doe it. Souldiers must neyther refuse nor dispute the commands of their General. The most violent and boysterous creatures are obedient to the call of God; *stormy winds and tempests fullfill his word* (Psal. 148. 8.) He speakes to the *lightnings*; and they say, *heere are wee* (Job 38. 35.) The very thunder which seemes to be all voyce, is all eare at the voyce of God. The Angels are so ready to goe, that they are sayd to fly, and their readines to doe the will of God in heaven, is made the patterne of our doing it here on earth. The Scripture speakes often of them as of an army employed in warres, eyther to destroy the wicked, or to be a guard to the people of God. We have an illustrious example of the latter in *Jacobs* case (*Gen.* 32. 2.) *And when Jacob saw them, he sayd, this is Gods host: and hee called the name of that place Mahanaim, that is, two hosts or companies.* And it might be so called, because *Jacobs* company or little host, and that company of Angels who were Gods host sent out to convoy him in safety, did both encampe upon the same ground: or rather because the Angels divided themselves into two companyes, The one encamping and marching before him as his Vantguard, the other behind him or in his Reere; That so he might see himselfe every way protected, and might be filled with a full assurance of safety. That God hath such numerous Armyes alwayes at hand and under command, is

First, A very comfortable hearing to all that love and feare God. The Apostle sayth (*Rom.* 8. 31.) *If God be for us, who can be against us?* that is, none can. Though many be against us opposingly, yet none can be against us prevaylingly. We may say also if the Lord be for us, who will not be for us? If God be our helper, we cannot want helpers, not onely because the helpe of God is enough without any more, but because, if he be our helper we shall have many more. When we see our selves utterly destitute of all helpes and helpers, yet God hath an army of helpers, he

he hath auxiliary forces ready for us. (*Psal.* 34 7.) *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that feare him, and delivereth them. David* speaketh as if one single Angel were a whole Army; *The Angel of the Lord* (sayth he) *encampeth*, he doth not say the Angels of the Lord encampe about them that feare him; and indeed every Angel of the Lord is more in power, then a whole Army of men; yet here, possibly, is meant that Angel who is the Lord, The Angel of the Covenant, who as Captaine General, with his army of created Angels encampeth about them that feare God. And if so, then they need not be afrayd. (2 *Kings* 6. 16, 17.) When the servant of *Elisha* cryed out for feare, *Elisha* answered, *feare not: they that be with us are more then they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, And sayd, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes that he may see, and the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw: and behold, the mountaine was full of horses, and Charrets of fire round about Elisha.* And thus it is often with us though wee discerne it not. Wee have many invisible succours, in our visible dangers. And as, that the Angels are our helpers in eminent and extraordinary dangers is very comfortable, so also, that they are so against ordinary, common or every day dangers. (*Psal.* 91. 11, 12.) *Hee shall give his Angells charge over thee; to keepe thee in all thy wayes. They shall beare thee up in their hands; lest thou dash thy foote against a stone*, that is, lest thou take hurt in thy dayly workes and travels.

Secondly, These Armyes are a terrour to all those who rebell and rise up against God, or are enemies to his people. Hee that resists God hath as many enemies as there are Angells in heaven, or starres in the firmament, or stones in the earth, or beasts in the feild; so many enemies hath he, and if God appeare as Captaine generall none shall be able to stand before his armyes, though he levy them of Grasse-hoppers, or flyes, or wormes, or lice. How should the greatest feare to provoke God, who can make them fall by that which is least? For as *David* acknowledged (*Psal* 33. 16, 17.) *There is no King saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength: a horse is a vaine thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.* So we must acknowledge, That if God will, any King may be destroyed by the smallest host, that a mighty man may be overcome by that which hath no strength, that a fly is a sufficient thing for ruine,

ruine, and that, if God say the word, even that shall not onely trouble but subdue any man with its little or no strength.

Secondly, Note.

The power which God can draw forth is a limitlesse power. His Armyes are without number.

When Princes have greatest Armyes they may number them, and tell you how many hundreds and how many thousands and how many hundred thousands they have. We have read of many very numerous Armyes, but wee never yet read of an innumerable army, onely Gods army is without number, and therefore onely his knowes no bounds. *Is there any number of his Armyes?*

And upon whom doth not his light arise?

Here *Bildad* sets forth the glory of the goodnes, omniscience and omnipresence of God, by his sending forth his beams of light, as he in the former part of the verse sets forth the glory of the greatnesse and power of God by his sending forth the Armyes of his strength.

De homine propriè dicit עַל מִי *super quem, cui omnia similiter lumen & virtutem ab eo accipiunt. Mere.*

Upon whom doth not his light arise?

The text may be read thus *Upon whom doth not his light stand?* or, *upon whom shall not his light stand?* Wee say, *upon whom doth not his light arise?* Both translations are good. But what is this light of God?

First, Wee may understand it of that common light, the light of the Sunne, for that is Gods light, and the universall arising of it upon the world is a wonderfull worke of God. For as God made the light, and gathered it into that great vessel the Sunne, so hee carrieth it about the world every day. The light of the Sunne is the messenger of Gods care and love to man every morning. (*Math.* 5. 45.) *Hee maketh his Sunne to rise on the Evill and on the Good*; that is, upon all, Good and Evill, divide the whole world between them: and while the text in *Mathew* saith, that *God maketh his Sunne to rise*, &c. it intimates that the Sunne riseth dayly by speciall direction from God; The Sunne is his, and the light is his, There is no creature that enjoyes the light of the Sunne, but is beholding to God for it. Hee that made the Sunne, maketh the Sunne to rise; as if the Sunne like a weary or tired traveller

traveller were unwilling to rise in a morning and renew his Journey, or long stage about the world, till called up by God, and commanded out for the service of mankinde, of Sun-light we may say, *Upon whom doth not his light arise?*

Secondly, This light may be taken more strictly for the light of divine goodnesse. All the good, the peace, the comfort, which wee injoy in the world, is comprehended under the name of light. When the Psalmist sayth, *Light is sowen for the righteous*, his meaning is, *good or comfort is sowen for the righteous*, (Psal. 97 11.) and, *Upon whom doth not this light arise?* The goodnesse of God extends it selfe over all. God doth good to all, though he doth more good for some; for as God would have us to doe good to all, but specially to the houshold of faith, so doth he. Hee sends forth so much light of goodnesse as will make all men eternally inexcusable who abuse it, but he sends forth so much light of his goodnesse to some as will make them eternally happy. The light of his goodnesse riseth upon good men to cause them to rejoyce and live comfortably; And unlesse some light of his goodnes did arise upon evill men, even upon the worst of men, they could not subsist, nor live at all. His light is the life of man, *and upon whom doth not this light of divine goodnesse arise?*

Thirdly, Wee may expound this light of the light of divine wisdome, which disposeth and ordereth all things; And doth not this light arise upon the whole creation? doth not this light shine upon every creature? doth not this light direct the wayes of man on earth? yea doth not this light arise upon the Angels in heaven, to direct them in all their wayes?

Fourthly, Wee may understand this light of the light of that knowledge by which God himselfe knoweth all things. As God is light essentially, or as all that he is, is light, so we may say more especially of his knowledge, it is light. Knowledge is the light of man, and therefore we say of an ignorant or unknowing man that he is in darknes; and thus also knowledge is the light of God; and when the Apostle *John* saith (*1 Epist: 1.*) *That in him is no darknes at all*, his meaning is, in him is no ignorance at all. God sends forth this light of his knowledge all the world over, he takes notice of all; As nothing is hid (in a common sence) from the heate or light of the Sunne in its walke about the world, so nothing is hid in any, the strictest sence from the knowledge of God.

Upon whom doth not this light arise? we are alwayes in the presence of God, his eye is upon us and sees us, he sees where we are, and what we doe; and as this light of his shines upon all things, so it will, at last, bring all things to light.

Now, among these foure interpretations given, I conceive that the word *light* is to be taken here in the second sence, *upon whom doth not his light arise?* That is, the light of the goodnes of God: which goodnesse is the infinite freenes and readines of his nature to doe good. And this light of his goodnes arising upon the creature is five-fold.

Videtur potius lucis, nomen ad eam quam omnibus infundit pertinere, per eam sunt omnia id quod sunt. Merc:

First, There is an upholding or preserving Goodnes, by which all things are maintained in their state and being.

Secondly, There is a quickning and refreshing goodnes, whereby all things (men, and among them godly men especially) are renewed and revived in their wel-being.

Thirdly, There is a protecting goodnes of God, whereby his are kept while they are in dangers.

Fourthly, There is a delivering goodnes, whereby his are brought out of and set free from danger.

Fifthly, There is a strengthning and supporting goodnes, whereby his are enabled to beare all the evills with which they are exercised in this world. And upon whom (yea upon what) doth not the light of the goodnes of God arise every day in some one or more of these particulars?

Hence Observe.

All the light of man or the light of all men is from God.

If any light arise upon man it is of God, and upon what man soever light ariseth it is of God. As the light of the ayre is his, so also is the light of our hearts. The light of life is his, and so is all that light of comfort which shines upon us while we live. *God is the father of lights, from whom every good gift and every perfect gift cometh* (Jam: 1. 17.)

Secondly, Observe.

God is very communicative of his goodnesse; upon whom doth not his light arise?

God doth not keep his light to himselfe *he is good and doth good*; he hath good, and doth good, he distributes it; God would not

have us, much lesse doth he himselfe *put his candle or light under a bushell, but hee sets it upon a Candlestick*, and it giveth light to all the world, it refresheth and warmeth all the world. As the light of the speciall goodnes of God in Christ ariseth upon all sorts and conditions of men in the world, so there is a light of his common providentiall goodnes which ariseth upon each man of every sort and condition in the world.

לא יקום *super quem non stabit lumen eius ut non solum exorientem & surgentem lucẽ, sed etiam consistentem calore, lumine et agendi facultate prepotentem & rebus omnibus humanis imminẽtem intelligamus.* Bold:

Another reading sayth, *Upon whom doth not his light abide?* The light of God is not onely an arising or springing light, but a continuing and an abiding light; It doth not onely breake out upon us, but dwell with us. The naturall Sunne ariseth every day upon us, but it doth not dwell with us, but is going from us as soone as it appeares unto us; and therefore it was miraculous when the Sunne stood still, or hasted not to goe downe about a whole day (*Josh* 10 13.) But the mysticall light of the goodnes of God is a light that dwelleth alwayes over our heads, and hasteth not to goe downe. And indeed if God should withdraw this light, or let it goe downe, if he should stop the influences of his kindnes from us, and cease to doe us good, we were ruin'd and undone; *for in him all things subsist, and are upheld by the word of his power*; if his light did not arise upon the creature, the creature would sinke into darknesse. Nor could wee abide what wee are, if this light did not abide upon us. And as this is true in reference to our naturall subsistence, so much more in reference to our spirituall. This light arising and abiding upon the Saints, maintaines and upholds them, both in their graces and in their comforts.

Bildad having thus set forth the power and greatnes of God in his dominion, and feare in his hosts and armyes, as also his kindnes and beneficence in his light arising and abiding upon man, proceeds in the latter part of the Chapter to shew the sinfullnes and unworthines, the impurity and impotency of man compared with God.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 25. Vers. 4, 5, 6.

How then can man be Justified with God? or how can man be clean that is borne of a woman?
Behold, even to the Moon and it shineth not, yea the Stars are not pure in his sight.
How much lesse man that is a worme, and the son of man which is a worme.

IN this context *Bildad* gives further check to *Jobs* presumption (as he conceived) in appealing to heaven, and in begging audience of God himselfe, which he did (as hath been shewed) with earnestnes at the 23d Chapter.

Vers. 4. *How then can man be Justified with God?*

The words are an Inference from what he had insisted upon and discourse before concerning the dominion and feare of God, concerning the number of his Armies, and the shinings of his light every where: from all which he concludes, *How then can man be Justified with God?* As if he had sayd, *Seeing God is so dreadfull, seeing he is an all-powerfull, an all-seeing, and an all-upholding God, how dareſt thou or any man living, plead with him? or how is it possible for any man living to stand out with God and live?*

How then can man be Justified with God?

This question, carrieth a strong denyall, To say, *How then can man be Justified with God?* is more then barely to say, *Man cannot be Justified with God*, How can it be? is not onely thus much, It cannot easily be, it cannot probably be, but it cannot possibly be, or it is Impossible to be; Such questions, *how a thing may be?* are usually an answer that they cannot be at all. Questions are sometimes put for Information or with desire to be directed, or to have the mystery opened how such things may be. The holy virgin put such a question (*Luke* 1. 34. when the Angel had told her shee should have a son) *Then sayd Mary unto the Angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man?* her question did

not Import her denyall of the thing, but her wonder at it, nor did it imply her unbeleese, as if shee thought it Impossible to be, but her desire to be Informed in the way and manner how it should be, and to that sence shee is answered, *The holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most high shall over shadow thee.*

But here (I say) the question, (*how can man be Justified with God?* is reducible to this plaine negative proposition; *Man cannot be Justified with God: How can man?* that is (as the word signifieth) miserable man, sickly man, weake Impotent man? and it may note not only the Impotency of his body, but of his spirit. Man is of a weake body at best, and of a more weake and sickly spirit. Master *Broughtons* translation reacheth both; *And why should sorrowfull man plead Justice with the Omnipotent?* Man is compassed about with sorrowes, and every man is in himselfe, what Christ was more eminently for us all, *a man of sorrowes, and acquainted with griefe* (Isa. 53. 3.) We take the word in its general signification.

אנש *calamitosus ægrotabilis, morbis mortis, obnoxius; sic latini mortalem pro homine dicunt.*

How then can man be Justified?

Bildad seemes (as some expound him) by this question, to suspect that *Job* had asserted *a selfe-Justification*, and it must be confessed that what he spake at the 23d *Chapter, ver.* 10, 11, 12. might give him some colour for that suspicion; *Hee knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed mee I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath followed his steps, his way have I kept and have not declined, neither have I gone back from the Commandements of his lips: I have esteemed the words of his mouth more then my necessary food.* While *Job* thus asserted his owne Innocency and Integrity, *Bildad* might possibly suppose that hee was asserting his owne righteousnesse; and therefore not without some indignation hee expostulates the matter with him, *How can man be Justified?* that is, pronounced cleane and quit at the Throne of God. *Justification* (Considered in the Gospel notion) *is that gracious sentence of God, wherein with respect to Christ apprehended by faith, hee absolveth the beleever from sin and death, and doth repute him just and righteous unto eternal life.* Of this the Apostle treates at large in the 3d 4th and 5th Chapters of the Epistle to the *Romanes*, and in that to the *Galatians*. This doctrine of free justification is the founda-

foundation and corner stone of all our comfort. For whereas there is a double change in the state of a sinner; first, a relative change; secondly, an absolute and reall change. The one is made in sanctification, the other in Justification; Sanctification is a reall change, subduing corruption, destroying the power of sin in us; but Justification is not a Physicall or real change in the person, it doth not make him that is unrighteous righteous in himselfe, nor is man at all Justified (in this sence) by any selfe-righteousnes, but it is onely a relative change as to his state. To Justifie is a Law terme, signifying, the pronouncing or declaring of a man righteous: So that Justification is an act of God upon us, or toward us: Sanctification is an act of God in us. This blessed Grace of Sanctification alwayes followeth the grace of Justification, as an effect or fruit of it; and though it may easily be distinguished from it, yet it can no more be separated or divided from it, then heate from fire, or motion from life.

Yet I conceave, that *Bildad* in this place doth not speake of Justification in that strict Gospel sence, as it imports the pronouncing of a man righteous, for the sake of Christ, or as if he supposed *Job* looked to be pronounced righteous for his owne sake. But *Bildad* speakes of Justification here, as to some particular act; As for instance, If any man will contend with God (and that *Bildad* chargeth *Job* with) as if God had done him some wrong, or had afflicted him more then was need, is he able to make the plea good, and give proofe of before the Throne of God; *How can man be Justified with God?*

There is a fourfold understanding of that phrase, *with God.*

First, Thus; *If any man shall presume to referre himselfe to the Judgement of God, shall he be justified?* (all at last must appeare before the Judgement of God, whether they will referre themselves to him or no, but) suppose a man referre himselfe to God (as *Job* had done by appealing to him) *can he be justified?* Will God upon the tryall & examination of his cause give judgement or sentence for him? But in this sence it is possible for a man to be justified with God; and thus *Job* was justified by God at last against the opinion and censures of his three friends.

Secondly, *To be Justified with God*, is as much as this, *If man come neere to, or set himselfe in the presence of God, shall be justified?* Man usually lookes upon himselfe at a distance from God, he

he looks upon himselfe in his owne light, and so thinkes himselfe righteous; but when he looks upon himselfe in the light of God, and as one that is neere God; will not all his spots and blemishes then appeare, or rather will not he himselfe appeare all spot and blemish? When he is once with God, will he be any thing with himselfe, but an impure and wretched creature? In this sence *Bildad* might check *Jobs* boldnes in desiring to come so neere God, *even to his seate*, which would but have made him more vile in his owne eyes, and discovered to him his owne impurities, as it did to the Prophet *Isaiah* (Chap. 6. 5.) and as it did also to *Job* himselfe, when he attained his wish, and got so neere to God, that he called it *a seeing him with his eye* (Chap. 42. 5.) Then we have not a word more of pleading his cause before God; His mouth was stopt, *and he abhorred himselfe, repenting in dust and ashes.*

Thirdly, *Can man be justified with God?* that is, if man compare himselfe with God, can he be justified? one man may compare himselfe with another and be justified. And thus, the faithfull people of God are called righteous and just in Scripture, comparatively, to wicked and unrighteous men. But how can any man be just or righteous compared with God, in comparison of whom all our righteousnesse is unrighteous, and our very cleanenes filthy?

Fourthly, *To be justified with God*, is, *against God*; that is, if man strive or contend with God, in any thing, as if God were too hard and severe towards him, eyther by withholding good from him, or bringing evill upon him; can man be justified in this contention, or will God be found to have done him any wrong? without all question he will not.

From the words taken in a generall sence observe.

Man hath nothing of his owne to justifie him before God.

There are two things considerable in man; first, his sinne; secondly, his righteousnesse; his worst and his best; all grant man cannot be justified by or for his sins, nor can he at all be justified in or for his owne righteousnesse. And that upon a twofold ground.

First, Because the best of his righteousnesse is Imperfect; and no Imperfect thing can be a ground of Justification & acceptance with God. For though God doth justifie those who are imperfect, yet

yet he never justified any man upon the account of that which is Imperfect. God never tooke cockle for his payment, he must have pure gold, and he seeth wel enough what poore stuff, what base coyne the best of our righteousnesse is, and therefore cannot admit any of it in justification. For the purpose of God is to exalt himselfe in Justice as wel as in mercy by the justification of sinners. And therefore the Apostle sayth (*Rom.* 3. 25, 26.) That *God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousnesse* (and he is not content to say it once, but saith it againe) *To declare, I say, his righteousnesse, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.*

Secondly, All the righteousnesse wrought by man is a due debt; how can wee acquit our selves from the evill we have done by any good which we doe, seeing all the good we doe, we ought to have done, though we had never done any evill? When we have done our best we may be ashamed of our doings, we do so poorly. But suppose we had done richly and bravely, suppose our workes (which indeed are full of drosse) were pure gold and silver, were precious stones and Jewels, yet they are already due to God. Wee owe all and all manner of obedience as wee are creatures; And wee can never justifie our selves from our transgressions, by satisfying (could we reach them) our obligations. There is enough in Christ to justifie us, but there is nothing in our selves; All than Christ did was perfect, and Christ was under no obligation to doe any thing, but what he willingly submitted to doe for us. This booke of *Job* beareth as great a testimony to this truth as any; How often doth *Job* disclaime all *selfe-justification* (Chap 9. 20, 21.) *If I justifie my selfe, mine owne mouth shall condemne me: if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would not I know my owne soule, I would despise my life.* What can be sayd more fully (to the tenour of the Gospel) for the abasement of selfe, and the advancement of free grace in justification. He sayd indeed (*Chap.* 13. 18.) *Behold now I have ordered my cause. I know that I shall be justified.* But he never sayd that he should be justified for the cause sake which he had ordered. There is a twofold justification.

First, The justification of a man in reference unto some particular act, or in his cause.

Secondly, The justification of a man in his person. When *Job* sayd,

ſayd, *I know that I ſhall be juſtified*, his meaning was, I ſhall be juſtified, in this caſe, in this buſines, I ſhall not be caſt as an hypocrite (for he alwayes ſtood upon and ſtiffely maintained his integrity) or I know I ſhall be juſtified in this opinion which I conſtantly maintaine; That a righteous man may be greatly afflicted by God, while in the meane time he ſpareth the unrighteous and the ſinner. A man may have much to juſtifie himſelfe by before God, as to a controverſie between him and man; but he hath nothing at all to juſtifie himſelfe by as to his ſtate towards God.

Againe, As theſe words are referred to *Jobs* complaint of the ſeverity of Gods dealings with him.

Obſerve.

Whoſoever complaines of the diſpenſations of God towards him, cannot be juſtified in it.

Thus the *Jewes* of old complained (*Ezek.* 18. 25.) *Ye ſay the way of the Lord is not equall.* But were they juſtified in this complaint, with God? How doth the Lord expoſtulate with them, in the next words, *Heare O houſe of Iſrael, is not my way equall? is not your way unequall?* As if he had ſayd; All the inequality is on your part, there is none on mine. The wayes of God, how hard and grievous ſoever they may be (as they were towards *Job*) yet unequall or unrighteous they can never be. The uſuall dealings of God with us are full of mercy, & his ſevereſt dealings with us have no want of Juſtice. *How then can man be juſtified with God?*

Or how then can he be clean that is borne of a woman?

Here's another queſtion of the ſame tenour, and in the 15th Chap: ver: 14th, *Elipbaz* ſpake almoſt in the ſame termes, *What is man that he ſhould be clean? and hee that is borne of a woman that hee ſhould be righteous?* *Jobs* friends beate often upon this poynt, vehemently ſuſpecting that he did over-weene his owne condition, and thought too highly of himſelfe. Whereas *Job* did not onely freely and ingeniouſly, but with a great deale of holy rhetorique and elegancy confeſſe againſt himſelfe againe and againe, that he neither was nor could be cleane before God; Onely he would not admit their plea againſt him, that he ſuffered for his uncleanenes, or that he was uncleane becauſe he ſuffered.

Maſter

Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates thus; *Or, The born of woman look to be cleared.* We ſay; *How can he be clean that is born of a woman?* that is, how can he have a nature at all clean, or be altogether cleane in his life, who cometh into the world through a world of uncleanene? Can the ſtreame be cleane, when the fountain is unclean? or the product be better then that which is produced. Man born of a woman by natural generation (ſo *Bildad* is to be underſtood) comes from an uncleane fountaine, from an Impure Original, and therefore, how can he be pure or clean? What the particular Emphaſis and importance of this phraſe (*To be born of a woman*) is, hath been opened already (*Chap.* 14. 1. *Chap.* 15. 14) and therefore I referre the Reader to thoſe Texts for a further Expoſition. And ſhall here onely give out this Obſervation.

All men borne of a woman by natural generation are impure and uncleane.

There was never but one man, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, born of a woman who was not uncleane, and he was born of a woman, not in an ordinary, but miraculous way; *The holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the moſt high ſhall overſhadow thee* (Luk. 1. 35.) All elſe born of a woman have been and are uncleane. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 5. 3.) *Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a Son in his own likeneſs, after his Image, and called his name Seth. Adam begat a ſon in his own likeneſs*; what likeneſs? it is not meant of his outward likeneſs, of the figure or feature of his body, that was the leaſt part of the likeneſs there intended, in wch his ſon was borne; every father begets a ſon in a humane ſhape; and we ſay the child is like his father, not only as having the ſame ſpecifical nature, but as having the perſonal figure and proportions of his father. But when it is ſaid, *Adam begat a ſon in his owne likeneſs, in his Image*, the meaning is, he begat a ſon that was a ſinner as himſelfe was, and corrupt as himſelfe was, even *Seth*, who was given in the place of *Abel*. God in the creation made man in his image after his likeneſs; Man by procreation begets a ſon, not in Gods image, but in his owne; And that not only like him in conſtitution as a man, but in corruption as a ſinner. *David* confeſſeth of himſelfe (*Pſal.* 51. 5.) *Behold I was ſhapen in Iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me.* Some to avoyd the

ſtrength and dint of that text, as to the proofe of the corruption of nature by propogation, put a moſt corrupt and baſe gloſſe upon it: As if *David* had therein onely confeſſed his parents ſin, fulneſs or inordinate affections in begetting and conceiving him; not his own natural ſinfulneſs as begotten and conceived. I know no better argument of the corruption of nature, then ſuch corrupt interpretations of Scripture; For doubtleſſe as *Bildad* here in the Text, ſo *David* was acquainted not only with the doctrine of original ſin, and the corruption of nature, but had found and felt the ſad effects of it in himſelfe, And from that experience could ſay, *I was ſhapen in Iniquity*, &c. as alſo conſent to what *Bildad* ſaith in this place, *What is man that is borne of a woman that he ſhould be clean?* dog but acknowledge that any one is borne ordinarily of a woman, and we may conclude him to be ſinful and uncleane. That I may make this a little clearer, I ſhall touch at three things, which are diſtinctly conſiderable in the ſin of *Adam*.

Firſt, That particular act, or fact againſt the Law, which he committed in eating the forbidden fruit.

Secondly, The legal guilt that flowed from that act, both upon his perſon and upon his poſterity.

Thirdly, The natural Corruption which as a conſequent of the former ſtayned all mankinde. Or there was firſt the tranſgreſſion of the Commandement, which was his eating the forbidden fruit; Secondly, there was the puniſhment of that tranſgreſſion, which was death inflicted for eating; thirdly, the depravation of the whole maſſe of mans nature, by which, as *Bildad* ſpeaks, *Every man borne of woman is unclean.* And theſe three fell upon the whole poſterity of *Adam*, or upon all that are born of a woman in a threefold way.

Firſt, The very act of *Adams* ſin becometh ours, for we did participate with him, and had, as it were, a hand in it, becauſe we all were ſeminally in him; ſo that when he ſinned, we all ſinned being in his loynes long before we were born, as *Levi* paid tythes in *Abraham* before he was borne (*Heb.* 7. 9. 10) Thus we all ſinned in his ſinning, and had a ſhare in that act of his, becauſe he ſtood as the roote of mankinde, and as having entred a covenant with God in that capacity. For he ſinned, not onely as a ſingle perſon, but as he was the repreſentative of all mankinde, and therefore what he did we are reckoned as doing the ſame with him.

Secondly, The guilt of that ſin is ours by particular Imputation, as the fact is ours by common participation; for as if *Adam* had ſtood in a ſtate of Innocency, that had redounded to us for good, ſo his fall or ſin redoundeth to us for evil.

Thirdly, There is the pravity or corruption of nature, iſſuing from that firſt ſin, and that is chiefly aymed at in the preſent text. And this is derived to us by propagation. The defilement of nature deſcendeth and paſſeth from generation to generation: therefore, *how can he that is born of a woman be clean?* and that defilement hath two things in it.

Firſt, The loſſe of original purity, or the defaceing and blotting out of the image of God in which man was created.

Secondly, A ſucceſſion of horrible deformity and diſorder, which conſiſteth, firſt, in a proneneſs to all evill; ſecondly, in an impotency and weakneſs, yea in an averſeneſs from and enmity againſt all that is good. So then, we have to do with the very act of *Adams* ſin by participation, with the guilt of it by Imputation, and with the filth and deformity of it by propagation: From all which it may wel be queſtioned, *How can he be clean that is born of a woman*, and concluded, *Every man borne of a woman is uncleane.*

Verſ. 5. *Behold, even to the Moon and it ſhineth not, and the Starres are not pure in his ſight.*

In this verſe *Bildad* proceedeth to argue downe the preſumption (as he conceived) of *Job*, by calling him to conſider thoſe things which are farre below God, and yet were farre above him, as if he had ſaid; *Wilt thou contend with God, when thou canſt not contend with the Moone and Starres? they have a brightneſs beyond any thing of thine, why then doeſt thou inſiſt ſo ſtiffely upon the ſhinings of thy converſation towards men, and the brightneſs of thine integrity towards God?*

Behold, even to the Moone and it ſhineth not.

There is a twofold underſtanding of theſe words; firſt, ſome expound them by deſcending; as if *Bildad* had ſpoken thus; *Be-*

hold O Job, and be both ashamed of and astonished at thy owne folly, in venturing upon a tryal before God, who is of such infinite purity, that while he looketh upon all these heavenly lights that are above the Moone, even to or as low as the Moon, which (as Astronomers teach) is the lowest of all the planets, it shineth not, there is no brightness, no beauty in any of them; They are all in comparison of God but clouds and darkness, but clods of earth and dirt. And if they shine not in the eye of God, surely much lesse deest thou, who art a worme, and but a clod of moving or breathing earth?

Secondly, Others expound it by ascending. As if *Bildad* had spoken thus: *Behold, O Job, and tremble at thy presumption in desiring that God should take so exact a scrutiny of thee & of thy cause: for look upon all the parts of the inferiour visible world, look upon all their glories and excellencies, and look not only upon those things that are creeping here upon the earth, but lift up thine eyes as high as the Moone it selfe, Behold even to the Moone (which is, as it were the boundary between the upper and the lower world: The Moone being the lowest of the upper world, and the highest of the lower world, now saith* Bildad, *surveigh the world up to the Moone) and it shineth not.*

But doth not *the Moone shine?* yes! the Moone shineth, the Moon is *that lesser light which was made to rule the night* (Gen 1. 16.) Why then doth he say *it shineth not?* the meaning is only this, that Moon light, and Sun-light, that all creature-light is no light, nor their shining to be called shining, when we speak of the light and shinings of God himselfe. The Moone shineth for the use and to the eye of man, but the Moon shineth not for any use to or in the eye of God. As because he is light, he needeth no light, so because there was no light till he created it, the light of the creature is nothing unto him.

The Moone and Starres shine, but when the Sunne is up they shine not, that is, not to our view; the Starres shine as much in the day as in the night, though we cannot see them being over-powred by that greater light, the light of the Sun; So when the glory of the Lord appeareth, both Sunne and Moone disappeare, and are no more seen. The light of the world is no light where God is named; doe but speake of God, and all the beauty and brightnesse of the creature fades and is extinct. The Moon is a very beautifull creature considered by it selfe, as *Job* speaks to shew how

Ne luna quidem lucida est collata cum deo Vatabl:

how far he was from idolizing it, notwithstanding all that beauty wherein it appeared to him (*Chap.* 31. 26.) *If I beheld the Sunne when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightnesse* that is, if I beheld either Sunne or Moone so as to adore and worship them; if I reckoned any thing of Moon and Sun, in comparison of God, if I did not judge the light of both as darkness and obscurity in reference to him, if I did not behold them so as if I did not behold them, not being taken up or dazz'ld at all with their shining brightnes, scarse at all seeing, not at al admiring any brightnes, but the brightnesse of God, if it were not thus with me, if I stood not at this distance, and upon these termes with the best of the creatures, then, &c. It argues that there is much natural beauty in the Moone, when as *Job* to shew his spiritual chastity saith that the beauty of it, did not at all withdraw or steale away his heart from God. Indeed such is the beauty of the Moone that it is used to shadow out the Church in her spiritual beauty (*Cant.* 6. 10.) *Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, faire as the Moone;* The Moon is fayre, yet she hath her spots; But God is fayre without any spot, and therefore the fairenesse of the Moone is no fairenesse at all to his.

There is another reading of the words (*Behold even to the Moon, and it doth not extend its tents, or doth not extend its light like a tent*; for when the light is spread first out, it is like the spreading of a tent upon the mountaines. To which the Prophet *Joel* seemeth to allude (*Chap.* 2. 2.) in that phrase, *As the morning spread upon the mountaines. Behold to the Moone, and it doth not spread out its light, nor extend its tents*; Our translation reacheth the sence fully; *It shineth not*;

ולא יאהיל
Et non expandit lumen suum in modum Tentorij Complut.

Yea the Starres are not pure in his sight.

The Starres are supposed higher and greater then the Moone; The Starres are pure and splendid bodies, as hath been shewed from other places of this booke. So that, when *Bildad* saith, *The Starres are not pure*, it is not an absolute denyal of their purity, but as himself expounds it, they are not pure in the sight of God. The Starres have neither those spots, nor those changes which the Moone hath, they are a more cleare and a more certaine light, yet *Even the Starres are not pure in his sight*, and we may reckon the Sunne among the Starres too, though sometimes they are spoken of

of distinctly, *Sunne, Moone, and Starres.* Thus *Bildad* pleads the excellency of God above the most excellent creatures, how much more above man, who is now cast much behind many of the creatures, through the corruption of his nature, and is not disparaged by being compared to the meanest of them. *Behold, even to the Moone and it shineth not, and the Starres are not pure in his sight.*

Hence Observe.

The glory or beauty of the most glorious and beautiful Creatures is no glory, no beauty compared with the glory and beauty of God.

Bildad instancing in the most beautiful Creatures, takes in the beauty of all the creatures; all which is but a ray, a beam of his infinite light, but a drop of his infinite Ocean: their glory is but an effect of his, and though the meanest of them are perfect in their state, yet the best of them are not perfect in degree. It was said anciently: *Look upon the heavens they are beautifull, look upon the earth that also is beautiful, but he that made heaven and earth is infinitely more beautiful then either of them both, or then both of them.*

When God had finished the work of Creation, it is sayd (*Gen.* 1. 31.) *And God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* How then is it said, that *the Moone shineth not, and that the Starres are not pure in his sight.*

I answer, First as before, all things which God made were good as creatures; but nothing was good as the Creator.

Secondly, I answer, the creature is not now so good as it was when first created, the sin of man did not onely pollute and stain the glory of man, but of the whole creation; and therefore the Apostle saith (*Rom.* 8 20, 21, 22) *That the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature it self also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travelleth in paine together untill now.* From this illustrious context it appears that God for mans sin hath put the whole creation to disgrace and suffering, and that all creatures are fallen from the first perfection by the fall of the first man; The very lights of heaven are made darke, and the Starres impure, by mans impurity.

rity. Now if by the sin of man, those creatures who in themselves are sinlesse, even the Moone and Starres, have contracted defilement, and are not without blemish in the sight of God, then how much lesse is man (by whom they have taken this infection) free from blemish or infection himselfe, as *Bildad* inferres in the next words and close of the Chapter.

Vers. 6. *How much lesse man that is a worm, and the son of man which is a worme.*

As if he had said, *If the Sunne Moone and Starres are not pure in his sight, how much lesse is man pure?* Nor is *Bildad* content to say how much less is man? but he giveth a very debasing comparison of man.

How much lesse is man that is a worm, and the son of man which is a worme.

Cum precedit sententia negativa particulæ illæ אפס *commodè redduntur quanto minus.* Pisc.

How much lesse] We may say also, how much more is man impure in his sight; So, the original words are often rendred; as the Reader may see in those places (*Pro.* 11. 31. *Pro.* 15. 11.)

Bildad layeth man as low as he can, shewing that he is so farre below the Starres that he is as low as a worme; and if the Stars be impure in the sight of God, how much more is man a worm? What's a worm? what a dark, dull thing is a worme to a Starre? yet that is not so dull a thing to a Starre, as a Starre is to God, therefore if the *Starres be not pure in his sight, how much lesse man that is a worme?*

A worme is one of the meanest Creatures, and the word that is here used signifieth the meanest of worms; properly and strictly those little wormes which breed in flesh or Cheese, or in any other kinde of food when it is corrupted. The word is used (*Exod.* 16. 24.) where it is said of the *Manna* that was reserved contrary to the command of God, That *it bred wormes*; such a worme is man; and *Bildad* is not content to say this once, but he saith it againe.

רמה *vermis parvus in carne aut caseo nascens.*

And the son of man which is a worme.

Here is the same thing doubled; And 'tis doubled by *Bildad* to assure

assure us of the truth and certainty of it; as if he had said, *I am not afraid to averr what I have spoken, I have said it, and I say it againe, how much lesse man, who is a worme, and the son of man which is a worme.*

The son of man; that is, any man, high or low, rich or poore, learned or unlearned, they who are at greatest distance in themselves meet all in this, They are wormes. To be called the son of man, imports the meannes of man, and minds man of his weakres and frailty. *Ezekiel* the Prophet is often spoken to by the Lord, in this stile, *Son of man*; the reason given by some is this, because he was a man often rapt up in the visions of God, or had the visions of God sent downe to him, he was a man that lived so much in heaven, that he might even forget that he was of the earth, therefore the Lord minds him often of his Original, by calling him, *Son of man, Son of man*; so here, *Bildad* mindeth man of the meannes of his birth, he is but *the son of man* Some proud men have drawne their pedigree from the gods, or from the Starres, *Alexander the Great* would be called the son of *Jupiter*, which was to say the son of the Sunne, he did not like to be called the son of man, though as he was so, so he was soon after convinced and confessed that he was so.

And the son of man which is a worme.

תולעה *vermis magnus & parvus, qui ab omn bus teritur & conterd tur.*

We expresse this latter branch by the same word *worm* in our English, but the Hebrew speakes it in a different word: and Master *Broughton* renders it differently in the Engl sh, *and the son of man a vermin.* The word signifieth both small and great worms, all sorts of worms or vermine; here's the state of man; and how can he who is such a worm stand before God, in his purity, when the Sunne Moone and Starres are impure before him?

Again, we may take notice that *Bildad* doth not say, man is like a worme, but *is a worme.* 'Tis not spoken by way of similitude, but of assertion.

Hence observe.

Man is a very poore thing.

So poore a thing that he is twice in this Text called a worme; the loweſt things serve for a Comparison and bear the likenes of the highest and greatest men in the world; man is but a worme, and

and the son of man, is no better, a worme or vermin. As it sheweth the excellency of God, that nothing is so good, so great, so perfect, that is worthy to be compared with him (*Isa.* 40. 18.) *To whom will you liken God? or what likene[illegible] will ye compare unto him?* Looke over all the Excellencies that are in the Creature, is there any thing that lookes like God? that hath not any excellency or beauty comparatively to him? And again (*Isa* 46.5.) *To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?* that is, there is nothing that you can compare or make me like unto, I am above all comparison ——— Now (I say) as it shews the excellency of God, that there is nothing worthy to be compared to him, so it shews the meannes of man, that there is nothing so unworthy but that he may be compared to it, and that without wrong or disparagement. The Scripture doth as it were strive for Comparisons, to set forth the weakness, the poorness, the worthlesnes of man; he is compared to, yea called dust (*Gen.* 3. 19.) *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt returne.* He is compared to the grasse of the field that groweth to day, but withereth or is cut down to morrow (*Isa.* 40 6.) He is compar'd unto a shadow that hath nothing of Entity or substance, and therefore continueth not but vanisheth away (*Job* 14. 2.) He is compar'd to that which is lesse then a shadow, even to that which is, as I may say, *the nothingnes of all things, vanity*; and thus he is called when at his best or in his best estate (*Psal.* 39. 5.) Further, man is not onely nothing and lesse then nothing, but that which is worse then nothing *a ly*, he is naturally under such disgrace, that he is the very *word of disgrace, a lye. Surely* (saith *David*, Psal. 62 9.) *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye.* Nor doth the Lord speake thus of single persons only, but of Nations, and not only of this or that Nation, but of all Nations; take mankind in a cluster or as bundled up together; not onely is this or that man, this or that Nation, but all men and all Nations *before him are as nothing, and are counted to him lesse then nothing and vanity* (Isa. 40. 17.) They are not onely dust, but (which is the lightest and most inconsiderable dust) *the dust of the ballance*, and that the smallest dust of the ballance (*Isa.* 40. 15.) they are not onely a drop, but *the drop of a bucket*, which is but the drop of a drop. The similitude in the Text layeth man low enough, *He is a worme.* When

the Lord would speake of his people at the loweſt rate in reference to the opinion which they had of themſelves, or which others had of them: he calls them *a worme*, (Iſa. 41. 14) *Feare not thou worme Jacob, and ye men of Iſrael*: God doth not ſpeak this to the diſparagement, or to the diſcouragement of *Jacob*, but to the comfort of *Jacob*: As if he had ſaid, though thou art a worm, though thou art thus low, thus mean, humbly in thy own thoughts, contemptuouſly in the thoughts of others, yet fear not; yea all ſhall have cauſe to be afraid of thee, for though thou art a worme, yet thou *ſhalt threſh the Nations and beat them ſmal*, &c. As National *Jacob* then, ſo perſonal *Jacob*, or *Jacob* in perſon before was but a worme in his own eyes. (*Gen.* 32. 10.) *I am not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies (or I am leſſe then all the mercies) and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant, for with my ſtaffe I paſſed over this Jordan*; that is, I came over in a very poore manner, all my ſtate was but a ſtaffe. Here *Jacob* in perſon ſpake of himſelfe as a worme: *and when we ſpeak thus like wormes, we ſpeak moſt like Saints.* Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſpake thus of himſelfe, as for our ſakes he became poore and emptyed himſelfe, as for our ſakes *he tooke upon him the forme of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſſe of man.* (Pſal. 22. 6) *I am a worme and no man, a reproach of men, and diſpiſed of the people.* O how low did Chriſt eſteem and ſet himſelfe, as, and while he ſtood in the place of ſinners? He not only confeſſed that he was a worm, becauſe a man, but that he was a worme and no man. How then ought every ſinfull man to abaſe himſelfe and ſay, *I am a worme and no man.* Man is a worme in a five-fold reſpect.

Firſt, Looke upon his original and conſtitution, he is from the earth as the worme is.

Secondly, Looke upon him in his natural ſtate and condition, he liveth upon the earth and earthly things, as wormes doe.

Thirdly, He is a worme, becauſe continually ſubject to danger, every foot may cruſh him.

Fourthly, As the worme is very ſubject to danger, ſo likewiſe unable to reſiſt, or make defence; the worm is a naked creature, and weares no armes, neither offenſive nor defenſive. Such a one is man, a worme, unable to defend himſelfe, unleſſe the Lord be his ſhield and a defence to him round about.

Fifthly, Man is a worme, for he muſt ſhortly returne into the Earth

Earth where the wormes are houſed; he is going to wormes, as a worme, and when he comes to the grave it will be worme to worme. As the Lord ſaid, *Duſt thou art and to duſt thou ſhalt returne*; ſo we may ſay, a worme thou art, and to wormes thou ſhalt returne. Thus we ſee man is a poore thing, a very poore thing, and hence I ſhall make foure or five brief inferences.

Firſt, Let no man be proud, or have high thoughts of himſelfe; the ſon of man is but a worm, O why doth man ſwel above the clouds, or proudly make his neſt among the Starres, when as he muſt ſhortly fall among the clods, and as he is a worm, ſo be eaten up of wormes.

Secondly, Let men take heed of adorning one another with great words and flattering titles, let us take heed of having the perſons of men in admiration, it is as vain a thing, for any man to give great flattering titles to others, as it is to have high thoughts of himſelfe. The titles which the Spirit of God gives to man, are humbling titles, a flower, a ſhadow, *&c.* any thing which may keep down his ſpirit and abate *ſelfe*-valuations; we ſhould learne as to think of our ſelves, ſo to ſpeake of other men as the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh. As he doth paint man out with praiſes, nor ſpeake of him as Courtiers (whoſe hearts are the ſhops of compliments, and their tongues the venters of them) do of Princes. So neither ſhould we: There are two extreames which we ſhould labour exceedingly to avoyd in our references to men; and yet moſt men walke in one of theſe extreames towards men. Firſt, we ſhould take heed of reproaching, vilifying, and diſpiſing others; for though it be a duty for every man to think meanely of himſelfe, and to ſay of himſelfe, I am a worme; and though we may lawfully think and ſay ſo of all men, as to the general truth of the propoſition, yet it is ſo farre from being a duty, that it is not at all lawfull to call any man worme, with reproach and contempt of the meanenes of his perſon. Secondly, we ſhould take heed of flattering and daubing others, as thoſe *Tyrians* did *Herod, crying out it is the voyce of God and not of man* (Acts 12. 22.) whereas God to ſhew their miſtake, and that he was indeed but a worm, ſmote him, and he was eaten up of worms. *Elihu* concludes and reſolves excellently to this poynt (*Job* 32. 21, 22.) *Let me not I pray you, accept any mans perſon, neither let me give flattering titles unto man; for I know not to give flattering titles, in ſo doing my maker would*

would ſoon take me away. As God took away *Herod* for receiving flattering titles, ſo they who give them are in danger to be taken away by God.

Thirdly, Be not Envious at others; what if another have a little more glory, riches, beauty, ſtrength, power, then thou haſt, what though he have a little more knowledg, and be a little higher in gifts then others, yet he is but a worm ſtill; what's man but a worme, and what's the ſon of man, (the beſt of men) but a worme? why ſhould a worm Envy a worme, what though ſome men are *ſilke-wormes*, a little better furniſhed and richer then others in mind and body, yet they are but worms in ſilke, and many who appeare ſo, are but *Glow-wormes*, which ſhine a little but have no conſiſtence.

Fourthly, Let the ſons of men take heed of vexing one another; why ſhould wormes riſe up againſt wormes, why ſhould wormes deſtroy wormes cruelly, bloodily? We are all weak as wormes, let us therefore engage that little ſtrength we have, for the ſupporting, not for the ruining of one another. We uſually have ſo much tenderneſſe towards worms in kinde, that when we ſee them crawling upō the ground, we avoid treading upon them; yet how do men purpoſely tread upon wormes in likenes. All men are wormes in likeneſs, we ſhould not willingly tread upon or hurt any man. But poor men, and men of low degree, are more wormes then rich men, and men in high places are, therefore take heed of oppreſſing the poore, for that is indeed, a treading upon wormes. And though while you tread upon worms the weak and needy, they cannot (as Chriſt ſpeakes of ſwine, *Math.* 7. 6.) *turn againe and rent you*, yet if you doe ſo. God, the ſtrong God will turne upon you and teare you while there is none to deliver.

Laſtly, Take this inference from it.

Man by ſin is much degraded and fallen below himſelfe.

Man by ſin is become inferiour to the meaneſt creatures, who was once above all viſible creatures: man in the ſtate of Creation was the chief piece of the viſible world, he was next to the Angels, who are of the Inviſible world, but now man is fallen very low, he is levell'd with the loweſt of the Creatures, a worm; not only doe the heavenly bodyes exceed him in beauty, but even the earthly bodyes, the beaſts of the field, and the worm that crawles upon

upon the earth, and lives in the bowels of it, is good enough to make compariſon with him. See what man hath loſt by ſin! ſee how he is degraded and fallen from his ſtate and ſtatelyneſs! yea I may ſay that man by ſin is not onely fallen from that ſtate and ſtatelynes wherein he was created, but he is fallen below the ſtate of the loweſt creature. Man (by ſin) is not onely a worme but worſe then a worme, A worm is not capable of moral polution; a toad hath natural poyſon, but man hath moral poyſon in him, which is worſe then naturall poyſon; and which makes the condition of man yet more vile, his moral poyſon (ſin I meane) is to him naturall. It is his miſery and his diſhonour that he hath it, and it is his greater miſery and diſhonour, that he loves it, and that it is not ſo much his diſeaſe as his deſire: and as the firſt ſin, the ſin of nature hath debaſed all mankind at once; ſo every man that goeth on in and multiplyeth (with deſire) the act of ſin, debaſeth himſelfe yet more, and maketh himſelfe not only lower then the worm, which is the loweſt of living things, but even lower then the loweſt things that have no life. Senceleſs liveleſſe creatures are better then ſinfull men, ſuch I meane as live in ſin, and better it had been for any never to have had a being, or not to have lived at all, then to dye in ſin.

Seeing then ſin hath degraded us, and placed us among and below the wormes, who were once next to Angels, how are we engaged to Jeſus Chriſt, who by becoming a worm for us, hath raiſed us to be heirs of bleſſedneſſe with the holy Angels for ever, and hath lifted us up to that hight of honour, that even the holy Angels miniſter to us as long as we are here. And how ſhould we ſtrive to raiſe our ſelves up higher & higher in the Improvement of all that grace which is freely offered to us in Chriſt, even to our dayly *converſation in heaven, and our ſitting together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Eph.* 2. 16.) It is ſad for any man who is but a worme, to be lifted up in himſelfe, but it is the duty of every man to ſtrive that he may be lifted up, not onely above the wormes, but above the heavens. We may quickly run in ſeeking our own exaltation in a worldly, But the more we ſeek our exaltation in a heavenly ſtate, the more holy, yea the more humble we are. We never act as thoſe who know they are but wormes here on earth, till we have an ambition to be like the Angels who are in heave

Thus

Thus I have opened and done with this third, and that a very ſhort diſcourſe of *Bildad* in this Chapter, wherein he hath ſpoken Excellently as to the generall truth, in exalting God and humbling man, yet he is upon the old miſtake, Concluding *Job a ſelfe-juſtifier yea a contender with God*; Whereas indeed his thoughts were as low as his ſtate or perſon, in reference to any conceit of righteouſneſſe in himſelfe, or of any boldneſſe in charging God with the leaſt unrighteouſneſſe (though there was much ſeverity) in his dealings with him.

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 26. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

But Job anſwered, and ſaid,
How haſt thou helped him that is without power? how ſaveſt thou the arm that hath no ſtrength?
How haſt thou counſelled him that hath no wiſdome? and how haſt thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?
To whom haſt thou uttered words? and whoſe ſpirit came from thee?

THIS Chapter containeth *Jobs* anſwer to the third and laſt diſpute or oppoſition of his ſecond friend *Bildad*; wherein he doth two things.

Non reſpondit ad Bildadi dicta, ſed eum videt quaſi ea attulerit quæ parum ad rem faciant, imo ab inſtituto aliena. Merc.

Firſt, He complaineth of and in a manner derideth *Bildads* dealing with him, as if what he had urged were not only little to the purpoſe, but very wide from it. This he doth in the foure firſt verſes of the Chapter.

Secondly, *Job* gives out a large narrative of the power, perfections, and excellencies of God, of his wonderfull works, and providences, which *Bildad* had but lightly touched; this he doth in the remaining part of the Chapter.

Verſ. 1, 2. *But Job anſwered, and ſaid, How haſt thou helped him that is without power?*

מה *admirantis eſt, qſi hoc dicit. ἐξαπορουμένος ſive ἀπορουμενος. Druſ.*

There is a queſtion among Interpreters, who is here meant, by him, *that is without power*, and who by *the arme that hath no ſtrength*; who *by him that hath no wiſdome*. There are three opinions about the reſolving of this queſtion.

Firſt, Some expound it not of a perſon, but of a thing, for the original

original leaves it in such words as may be determined upon either, and may as wel be rendred, *that, which hath no power, as, him that hath no power.* And the thing without power, which this interpretation aymes at, is the opinion or tenet which *Bildad*, and his friends had held forth in their discourse: which *Job* is conceived to looke upon, as weake, and without power, as having neither strength nor wisdome in it. And because *Bildad* made the last reply, *Job* (according to this exposition) bespeaks him thus, *Thine own former arguments, as also those of thy friends, had no power, no strength of reason, nor true wisdome in them, and hast thou mended the matter now, hast thou by what thou spakest last put any strength into what hath been weakly and feebly argued already? As for my selfe I am neither better enformed nor comforted, then I was, and therefore have reason to conclude, that there is no more strength nor power in what is now said, then in what was said before.* It is usual to apply strength to a speech we say such a man made a strong speech, as for such a one, his speech had no strength no fineness in it. And that speech which hath no strength in it, can never administer strength to those to whom it is spoken; so that to say, *how hast thou helped him that hath no power*, is to say, the speech by which thou hast attempted or endeavoured to help him that hath no power. Yet I conceive that *Job* doth here intend a person, whom his friends supposed without power, strength, or wisdome rather then his friends speech, which himself judged and (as his own reliefe) found to be so.

Secondly, By *him that hath no power, and the arme that hath no strength*; some understand *God himself*; who is indeed all power, all arme, who is altogether strong and onely wise. As if *Job* had said, *O Bildad, thou hast stood up in the defence of God, as if he had not been able to defend himselfe, thou hast been an Advocate for him, who hath no need thou shouldest. Hath not he power? hath his arme no strength in it? or is he destitute of counsel? surely God hath no need of thy patronage or assistance? Therefore consider whose helper thou hast been? what? the helper of him that is weake, and hast thou sustained the armes of him that hath no strength? surely no, God hath strength enough to defend his own cause, and wisdome enough to maintaine his own acts against me and all men else. Thou oughtest indeed to have helped him that hath no power, but thou hast onely given help to him that hath all power.* Thus some carry on the whole

In qua re adjuvisti sententiâ tuam de providentia dei particulari, in qua nulla sunt vires. Quare ex Hebræo legit, non cujus sed quid adjuvisti. Vatabl:

Hoc de deo accipio O quam egregie eum adjuvisti qui imbecillis erat, & invalidis es patrocinatus. Quasi tua defensione deus indigerit. Merc:

Cujus adjutor es nam in debilitate & sustentas brachium ejus qui non est fortis. Vulg: Cui auxiliatus es, qui non potentia? Mont.

whole context under that frame and form of this exposition, as if *Job* did but rebuke *Bildad* for undertaking the matter on Gods part, whereas he should have used his utmost endeavours for the support and comfort of him a poore weak creature, labouring under heavy burdens of most sad afflictions, and wanting counsel, how to bear and improve them as layed upon him by the hand of God. For this *Job* had no power and might expect help from his friend; but he bestowed all his help in vindicating the honour of God against *Job*, not in helping or advising *Job* how to beare up under the hand of God, and therefore he thus interrogates him. *How hast thou helped him that hath no power?* But

Thirdly, I rather expound the words of *Job* himselfe, as being now burdened and distressed with great affliction, and under sore temptations, and therefore fitly represented in these words, *a man without power, an arme without strength, and him that had no wisdome*; at least that he was such in the opinion and judgement of his friends. As if he had said, *O Bildad Thou lookest upon me as a man without power, strength, or wisdome; very well, be it so as indeed (though not in thy sence) it is so, what hast thou done? how hast thou helped him that is without power? how savest thou the arme that hath no strength? how hast thou performed the part of a friend, either in comforting me, or in counselling me?* so the words are a close Ironicall rebuke of what *Bildad* said in the former Chapter. *Thou camest to strengthen and help me, consider how well thou hast made good thy owne intendment; how hast thou helped him that is without power? thou hast spoken words fitter to weaken, then to strengthen, to cast down then to raise up; and so hast quite mistaken the matter. Thou shouldest not have amplified the power and majesty of God before a man in my condition, Thou shouldest rather have opened the doctrine of free grace, and of the fatherly affection of God to his poor servants and children, while they are under his sharpest corrections: Thy words should have been like oyle, like milke and honey, but thou hast spoken very hard words, if not gall and wormwood to my wearied soule. Though what thou hast spoken be in it self true, yet it is to me improper and unsuitable, out of time and unseasonable, and therefore weigh with thy selfe; How hast thou helped him that is without power?* We may paralel this context with that of the Apostle, (1 *Cor.* 4. 8. 10.) where with much holy derision he rebukes the over weening and high opinion which the *Corinthi-*

ans had of their present attainments, and perfections in spirituals; *Now ye are full, now you are rich, ye have reigned like Kings without us, and I would to God that ye did reigne, that we might reigne with you*; As if he had said, I could wish with all my heart, it were as well with you as you think it is; that we also might have a part with you in those gloryes of the Gospel; But I feare ye are onely puft up with notions, and that your portion is but small in true solid spiritual knowledge. I feare ye have little except in conceit; and there ye have a great deale too much; and upon the same account he puts it upon them againe at the 10 h verse; *We are fools for Christs sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weake, but ye are strong, ye are honourable, but we are despised.* Thus *Job* here, ye look upon me as a weake man, as a man of no power, but you are wise, and learned; see how ye have played your part, and discharged your duty; you think you have a wonderful facculty in helping the weake, in saving those who are ready to perish, in teaching the unlearned, in counselling the unwise; whereas I am neither so weak, nor ignorant, nor destitute of counsel as you thinke I am; and if I were, your oration is wide of the marke or reacheth not my case, and therefore can do me no good. *How hast thou helped him that hath no power?* And which is the same in other words;

How savest thou the arme that hath no strength?

The arme is an eminent member of the body, and in Scripture it often signifies strength, because the arm holdeth out and acteth the strength of the whole body; *How hast thou saved the arme that hath no strength?* that is, the man that hath no strength. There is a threefold strength; first, natural, which is twofold; first, of the mind or inward parts; secondly, of the body or outward parts: secondly, there is a civill strength, which is the command or Authority which a man hath over others, thirdly, there is a spiritual strength, which is the command which a man hath over himself, both in doing good and in avoyding evill, or both for the due enjoyment of good and induring of evil. When, *Job* saith, *How savest thou the arme that hath no strength?* we may expound it both of the first and third sort of strength. For *Job* had indeed lost the strength of his body, and his friends thought he had lost the strength both of his parts and graces. Which is more cleare in the next interrogation. Vers. 3.

Vers. 3. *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdome?*

To give counsel is the worke of the wise, and they who are unwise have most need of counsel, though they seldome thinke so. And it may be a very disputable question, who is the wiser man, he that gives good counsel, or he that readily receives it & makes good use of it. Good counsel directs how to judge of things, how to speake, and how to act. *In the multitude of Counsellers there is safety* (saith *Solomon*) and they must needs be unsafe, who either have none to give them counsel, or refuse wholesome counsel whē 'tis given. Counsel is to a man without wisdome as bread is to a man that is hungry, or as cloaths to a man that is naked. Master *Broughton* translates; *What dost thou counsel without wisdome?* Right counsel is the very spirits of wisdome; but thy counsel is flat and hath no spirits in it. Thus his translation referrs the want of wisdom to the counsel which *Bildad* gave *Job*; but ours referrs it to *Job* to whom *Bildad* undertook to give counsel. *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdome?* As if he had said; Thou O *Bildad* lookest upon me, as a man without wisdom, If I am so, I do not perceive that thy counsel is like to make me much wiser. Thy counsel will even leave me where it found me, and 'tis well if it doe not put me backward. What strange kind of counsel is thine! *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdome?* From all these cutting questions put together,

Observe,

First, *They who are weake, and without wisdome, should be holpen, and tenderly dealt with, by grave and gracious counsel.*

The words of the wise conveigh strength to the weake, comfort to the sorrowfull, and counsel to those who know not what to doe. See the tendernesse of Christ to the weake (*Matth.* 12. 18, 19) *Behold my servant whom I have chosen, and my beloved in whom my soule is well pleased, I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgement to the Gentiles.* He meaneth not *judgement*, as *judgement* is opposed to mercy Jesus Christ did not come in that sense to shew judgement to the Gentiles, he did not come to bring wrath upon them, but he came to shew mercy to the

Gentiles, to those who were sinners of the Gentiles, who sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death, he shewed merciful judgement, he shewed them the knowledge of God, he reformed and purged them from their sins and sinful Idolatry, he brought them into a holy state & order under Gospel Government, this is the judgment which Christ brought to the Gentiles & this judgment is a mercy; *he shall bring Judgement to the Gentiles*; How shall he doe it? *he shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man heare his voyce in the streets*; that is, he shall not deale boysterously, and contentiously, he shall not be vexatious, and rigorous, he shall not act as a man chafed and enraged, as a man full of wrath and fury, but as a man most tenderly affected and full of pity, for *a bruised reed shall he not breake, and smoaking flax shall he not quench*; a bruised reed, and smoaking flax, are emblems of the weake, of the arme without strength, of those who are without wisdome; Christ will not deale roughly with those, *he will not breake the bruised reed, nor quench the smoaking flax*, that is, such as are broken with the sence of sin, such as are weak in faith, such as are so much over-powred by corruption, that they doe rather smoake, and make an ill sented smother, then burne or shine in a gracious profession, such as are thus low and meane in spiritualls, Christ will not break with his power, nor quench with his rebukes, *till he send forth judgement to victory*, that is, till he hath perfected their conversion, and hightned their graces to the full, and caused the better part in them to prevaile over the worse (as the house of *David* did over the house of *Saul*) till it arive at a blessed victory. And againe (*Isa.* 61. 2.) *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me*, (for what) *because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meeke, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaime liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.* Here is *helping those that have no power, and saving the arme that hath no strength.* Thus Christ handles those who through temptation, affliction, or any trouble are brought low. For the neglect of this duty, the Lord reproves the Shepheards (*Ezek.* 34. 2, 3, 4.) *Son of man prophesie against the Shepheards of Israel, prophecy and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God unto the Shepheards; Wo be to the Shepheards of Israel, that doe feed themselves, should not the Shepheards feed the flockes?* That is, should they not be more intent upon the feeding of their flocke

flock with spiritualls, then upon the feeding of themselves with temporalls? should they not labour more to feed the peoples soules then their own bellyes? surely they ought. But what did the Shepheards of *Israel*? The next words shew us both what they did, and what they did not, *Ye eate the fat, and ye cloath you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed.* These things they were forward enough to doe; But see what they did not *ye feed not the flock*, That's a general neglect of duty; then followeth their neglect of particular duties; *The diseased have ye not strengthned, neither have ye healed that which is sicke, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought againe that which was driven away* (by force of Satans temptation) *neither have ye sought that which was lost* (through selfe-folly and corruption) Here is a large inditement against the Shepheards, All which may be summed up in *Jobs* language to *Bildad*; They did not helpe those who had no power, they did not save the arme without strength, nor counsel, those who had no wisdome. See again how the Prophet describes the compassionatenes of God to his people in an afflicted condition (*Isa.* 27. 8.) *In measure* (that is, moderately) *when it shooteth forth thou wilt debate with it, he stayeth his rough winde, in the day of the East winde*; that is, when affliction, like an East-winde blowes feircely upon his from the world, then he stayeth *his rough winde*, he will not bring his rough wind out of his treasures to joyn with the East-winde. God will deal gently with his when they are hardly dealt with by men. And thus it is our duty when it is a day *of the East winde*, a day of trouble, and temptation upon any soule, to stay *the rough winde*, to breath gently, to give refreshment and ease to the weary soule; *How hast thou helped him that hath no power? how savest thou the arme that hath no strength?*

Secondly, Observe.

The manner how we perform any duty is to be attended as well as the matter.

Bildads businesse was to comfort the sorrowfull, to strengthen the infirme; how did he performe this? his strengthning was a weakning, his helping was a grieving of *Job* already weake and grieved; and the reason was, because he failed in the manner, or mannaging of this worke, we must be carefull as to doe good for the

the matter, ſo to doe it effectually, which cannot be unleſſe it be done rightly. Some goe with an honeſt purpoſe to help, who yet adminiſter no help at all, to every ſuch helper it may be ſaid with rebuke, *How haſt thou helped him that is without power?* how unhandſomely haſt thou done it? what work haſt thou made of it? Thou haſt but entangled the poore ſoule worſe then before, This runs through all duties. We may ſay to ſome, *How have you prayed, and called upon God?* They onely ſpeake a few words, preſent a few petitions, but without a heart, without faith, without a ſence of the preſence of God, or of their own wants; how have ſuch prayed? call ye this prayer? we may ſay to others, how have you heard the word of God? is this to heare? what to receive the ſound or ſenſe of the word, and never to mind it more, never to digeſt nor turne what is heard into practice; is this hearing: We may ſay to others, how have you faſted and humbled your ſoules before God? *Is this a faſt that God hath choſen, a day for a man to hang down his head like a bullruſh; Is this faſting to God, even to God?* No, This is but a *mock faſt*, a *No faſt*; God hates ſuch formality, in praying, hearing, faſting, with a perfect hatred. A body exerciſed and a ſoul ſitting ſtil, is not worſhip God is a ſpirit and will be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth; In the truth or according to the rule of his own word, as alſo in the truth or according to the ſincerity of our own hearts: unleſſe we worſhip God in this twofold truth we worſhip him not at all, as he will be worſhipped, how much ſoever we ſeeme to have a will to worſhip him. As *Job* here puts a queſtion mixt with admiration and indignation to his helper; *How haſt thou helped him that hath no power?* How ilfavordly how bunglingly haſt thou done it? So the Lord will put ſuch a queſtion to many of his worſhippers; *How have ye worſhipped him that hath all power?* how ſlightly, how formally, how hypocritically have ye done it? Therefore in all duties, *look to the manner, as well as to the matter, and labour to doe them well, as well as to doe them.* To neglect the doing of a duty, or the doing of it negligently are alike offenſive unto God; and he will ſay to the latter with as much diſpleaſure, *How haſt thou done what I commanded?* as he will to the latter, *Why haſt thou not done what I commanded?* yea

Thirdly, Obſerve.

That which is not done as it ought is to be judged, as if not done.

That which we ſtrive not to doe in a right manner, we (upon the matter) doe not at all. We may reſolve theſe interrogations of the Text into negations, *How haſt thou helped him that is without power?* is as much as this, *thou haſt not helped him: how haſt thou the arme that hath no ſtrength?* is indeed, *Thou haſt not ſaved him: how haſt thou counſelled him that hath no wiſdome?* carryeth this meaning, *thou haſt given him no counſel*; we uſe to ſay, *as good never a whit, as never the better*, and how good ſoever any thing is that we doe, if we doe it amiſſe, it will be reckoned by God (what reckoning ſoever men make of it) as if we had done no ſuch thing. *Moſes* ſaid to the Lord under a temptation, when he was troubled at the complaint of the people, becauſe the deliverance promiſed did not come on, and they were not freed as was expected; *Lord, wherefore haſt thou ſo evill entreated this people? why is it that thou haſt ſent me? for ſince I came to Pharoah to ſpeake in thy name, he hath done evill to this people, neither haſt thou delivered thy people at all,* (Exod. 5. 23.) Is this a deliverance? this is no deliverance; we are apt to thinke the mercies of God no mercies, unleſs he give us full and perfect mercies unleſſe we preſently receive all that we looke for, we look upon it as if we had received nothing at all. But how truly may the Lord ſay to the children of men, when they perform duties ſlightly, and negligently, ye have not done them at all, ye have neither prayed, nor heard, nor faſted at all, becauſe ye have been egligent in, and unprofitable under them. The workes and duties of the beſt are not every way full, but the works and dutyes of ſome are altogether empty; and they doe nothing in all they doe.

Fourthly, In theſe ſeverall interrogations, are hereheld forth the ſeverall effects of holy advice given according to the word, and mind of God; *how haſt thou helped him that is without power? ſaved the arme that hath no ſtrength? counſelled him that hath no wiſdome?* As if he had ſaid, thou indeed haſt offered me counſel from God, if thou hadſt managed it right, this would have bin the fruit of it, I who have no power ſhould have been helped, and I who am as an arme without ſtrength ſhould have been ſaved.

Hence obſerve.

That the word of God or divine truths are mighty in operation, when duely adminiſtred.

The word of truth conveigheth ſtrength to the weak, wiſdome to

to the simple, comfort to the sorrowfull, light to those who are in darkenesse, and life unto the dead. The word *lifts up the hands which hang downe, and the feeble knees. The law of the Lord* (that is, every holy truth, saith *David*, Psal. 19. 7, 8.) *is perfect* (and what can it doe? the next words tell us) *converting or restoring the soule. The testimony of the Lord is sure* (and what can that do? the next words tell us) *making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right* (and what can they doe? even that which is most sweet where it is done) *rejoycing the heart: The commandement of the Lord is pure* (in it selfe, and it worketh gloriously in us) *enlightning the eyes.* I may say also, The word of the Lord is mighty, and it giveth strength to those who have no might. As it is mighty for the *pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, & every thing that exalteth it self against the knowledg of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ* (2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.) So it is as mighty for the raising up of the weak, for the lifting up of those who are cast down and fallen below the knowledge of God through unbeliefe; and for the bringing of poore soules out of captivity into that blessed liberty of faith in Christ. What Great things the word rightly applyed, and divine truths brought home with Authority, have done and still can do was shewed at the 4th Chapter of that book, verse 3d and 4th. As also at the 25th verse of the sixth Chapter, upon those words, *How forcible are right words?* Though we ought to help those who have no power by more then words, yet words have holpen many who had no power; as *Job* doth more then intimate while he reproves *Bildad* for his unskilfull wording it with him. *How hast thou helped*, &c.

And how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

תושיה *Aquila* Γνῶσιν ἐσὶν, *Appellans a* Ὢν *quod esse significat, sapientia omnium existentium prima & principium est.* Drus.

That which we render, *The thing as it is*, is but one word in the Original, and it hath a threefold signification.

First, It is put for the essence, substance, or being of a thing; The Greek word for substance, is very neere this in sound, and may possibly be a derivative from it.

Secondly, It signifieth that *working* or *operation* which flowes from being; Things first are, and then they act, and they are to little or no purpose unlesse they act.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It signifieth *counsel, advice, wisdome*, or sound wisdome (*Pro.* 3. 21.) so Mr. *Broughton* translates, *And makest advice knowne abundantly.* Others taking up the same notion render, *How hast thou declared wisdome abundantly.* As if he had said, *Thou thinkest thou hast opened a treasure and declared store of wisdome and knowledge in this discourse, or that thou hast made a very wise and learned discourse, whereas indeed it will be found lean and short in it selfe, as also impertinent to the poynt in hand.* Our translation takes it in the first sense, *How hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is*, that is, how hast thou declared the substance of the thing, or the solid truth in plenty, or as the Hebrew phrase imports, in great number and with much variety.

לרב *ad multitudinem vel multiplicitèr.*

Hence note.

First, *Every thing ought to be declared as it is, that is, the naked truth ought to be declared.*

It is our duty to speake of things as they are, not to put colours upon them, and so make them appeare what they are not, or otherwise then they are; truth is plaine, and truth should be told plainly. The naked truth, or, *the thing as it is*, is most beautifull to the eye of the understanding. And though *Bildad* did misreport what he spake of God, yet he did not make a ful report. *How hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?*

Secondly, Hence note.

As we ought to speake the truth, so to speak the truth out, or all the truth.

Paul tells the Church of *Ephesus* (Acts 20. 20.) *That he had kept nothing back that was profitable for them; and* (saith he, *ver.* 27.) *I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.* *Paul* plentifully declared the thing as it was. *Bildad* spake truth, but not all the truth, as to *Jobs* case. He spake great things of the power and holinesse of God, but *Jobs* case called him to speake as much if not more and rather of the goodnesse & kindnesse of God. He spake enough to humble and cast *Job* down, at the sight of his natural uncleanenesse, but he should have spoken more to raise him up and comfort him by shewing him that fountain which is opened to wash in for sin and for uncleanenesse. We may quickly entangle a soule by speaking truth, unlesse we shew him all that

truth which belongs to his condition. *The Scriptures have plenty of truth in them, and are therefore able to make us wiſe unto ſalvation; They are profitable for doctrine, for reproofe, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſſe.* The Scripture is like that River ſpoken of (*Gen.* 2. 10.) which went out of *Eden* to water the Garden, and from thence it was parted and became into foure heads: *Paul* in that place now mentioned (2 *Tim.* 3. 16.) ſhews us the Scripture parting it ſelfe into four heads; firſt, of *Doctrine*, for eſtabliſhing the truth; ſecondly, *of reproofe*, for removing of error, thirdly, *of correction*, for the beating down of ill manners; fourthly, *of inſtruction*, for building up in holy converſation; That ſo (as it there follows) *the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works*; that is, in *Jobs* language, that he may be able *plentifully to declare (the ſolid truth) the thing as it is*, and as knowingly to declare General truths, ſo to apply them diſcerningly to the ſtate of every perſon; A fayling wherein *Job* is ſuppoſed to charge *Bildad* with in the next verſe.

Verſ. 4. *To whom haſt thou uttered words?*

Quem docere voluiſti, nonne eum qui fecit ſpiramentum Vulg:

Here *Job* taxeth *Bildad* with inconſiderateneſſe, in reference to the perſon to whom he ſpake; *To whom haſt thou uttered words?* haſt thou conſidered to whom thou ſpakeſt? The vulgar tranſlation referrs it to God, *whom wouldſt thou teach? wouldſt not thou teach him who made the breath? ſurely thou takeſt upon thee to teach him, who is the teacher of us all.* Thus many carry on the ſence of this fourth verſe according to the ſecond interpretation of the ſecond and third verſes. With which preſumption *Job* taxed his friends once before, and that in expreſſe terms (*Ch.* 21. 22) *Shall any teach God knowledge? ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high.*

But I conceive *Jobs* meaning is onely to ſhew *Bildad* that he had not wel adviſed about his caſe and condition before he ſpake; for *Bildad* might ſay, is this a queſtion to be asked, *to whom have I uttered words?* have not I been ſpeaking to thee all this while? art not thou the man for whoſe ſake we are here met, and about whom we have had all this diſpute? Why then doſt thou aske, *to whom haſt thou uttered words?* *Job* doubted not who it was to whom he ſpake; but *Job* queſtions him as fearing he was not well acquainted with, or had not enough layd to heart the ſtate of the man

man to whom he ſpake, doſt thou know what my condition is, and haſt thou ſuited, and cut out thy diſcourſe to my condition? *to whom haſt thou uttered words?*

Hence note.

We ſhould well conſider the ſtate of every perſon to whom we ſpeak, and apply our ſpeech or doctrine accordingly.

Bildad in the former Chapter had been ſetting forth the power, majeſty, and dread of God, as alſo his infinite purity before whom the Angels are not cleane; now ſaith *Job*, *to whom haſt thou uttered theſe words?* ſhould I be thus dealt with, thus handled, who am a man caſt downe already and under the terrors of God? Is this diſcourſe (though an undoubted truth) ſutable to my condition? Thou ſhouldeſt rather have repreſented God to my faith in his goodneſſe, and mercy, in his long ſuffering, and patience, in his tenderneſſe and gentleneſſe towards ſinners, thou ſhouldeſt have proclaimed that name of God to me which is his Glory (*Exod.* 34. 6.) *The Lord, The Lord gracious, and mercifull, long ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth*; this had been a deſcription of God, a proclamation of God fit for a man in my caſe. Whereas thou haſt onely told me of his mighty power and dominion, of his Hoſts and Armies; doeſt thou know to whom thou haſt uttered theſe words? Jeſus Chriſt, when here on earth, conſidered to whom he was uttering words, and therefore tells his Diſciples (*John.* 16 12.) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot beare them now.* Chriſt would not put new wine into old bottles, but attemper'd his ſpeech to the ſtrength and capacity of his hearers. Some muſt hear that which they cannot beare (when that ſprings from their paſſion and impatience, eſpecially when from their love to and reſolvedneſſe to goe on in ſinne; *Amos* muſt not forbeare to ſpeak, though *Amaziah* cry out, *The Land is not able to beare all his words*) But we muſt take heed of forcing words upon any which they cannot beare, or are not fit to hear, either by reaſon of their afflictions and temptations, or by reaſon of their preſent infirmities and incapacities. The Apoſtle (2 *Tim.* 2. 15.) bids *Timothy ſtudy to ſhew thy ſelfe approved unto God*, (he doth not meane it in his private courſe of life and dayly converſe, which is the duty of every beleever) but in his publicke courſe of life, or converſe as a Miniſter of the Goſpel, in that,

saith he, *study to shew thy selfe approved (unto God) a workman that needeth not to be ashamed*, (what kind of workman was *Timothy*, his worke lay in the Word, shew thy selfe a workman, and a Master in thy worke) *rightly deviding the word of truth*; how is the word to be divided? he doth not meane of a gramaticall, nor of a logicall division (though there may be a use of these divisions of the Word) but the dividing of the word intended by *Paul*, is the dividing of it spiritually to the several states, and conditions of men, giving to such, a word of instruction, to others a word of reproofe, to a third sort words of comfort: This is *dividing the word aright*; And in doing this, *Paul* would have *Timothy* declare himselfe *a workman that he needeth not be ashamed*. He would have him know to whom he uttered words: to know when he spake to sinners, and when to Saints, when he spake to the afflicted, and when to them that were in a comfortable estate; He would have him know when he spake to those who were hardned in their sin, and when to those whose hearts were broken under the weight and sence of sin. And thus as every man who uttereth words, so Ministers of the Gospel especially should be well advised to whom they utter them. For as the same garment will not serve every body to weare, nor the same bed to lye upon, so the same word will not serve every soule. We must not do as the Tyrant, who made one bed serve all his guests, and they that were too long for it were cut shorter, and they who were too short were stretched longer. Yet thus doe they who have but one word for all comers, or for all they come to, We would judge him a very unskilfull Physitian, who, let the disease be what it will, should prescribe one and the same medicine, or apply the same salve (though a very soveraigne one), to every soare. As we say, *That which is one mans meate is another mans poyson*, so we may also say. *That which is one mans medicine may be anothers mans poyson*; That which cures one disease may encrease another. Therefore the Physitian must consider to whom he gives the potion, as well as what he gives, and the Chirurgion must not onely know what his salve is, but to whom he applies it, so in this case, *To whom hast thou uttered words?* weigh it wel, whether they be babes or strong men in Christ, whether they be under peaceable or troublesome dispensations, whether obstinate, or tender-hearted; For these must be differently dealt with, as their states doe differ. We

We may else doe more hurt then good. We may quickly (as the Prophet speakes, *Ezek.* 13. 19.) *Slay the souls that should not dye* (that is, grieve & trouble the godly) *& save the souls alive which should not live*, that is, harden and fatten the wicked in their sins. The Apostle hath left us an excellent rule by his owne practice (*1 Cor.* 9. 19.) *Though I be free from all men, yet have I made my selfe servant to all that I might gain the more, and unto the Jewes I became as a Jew, that I might gaine the Jewes, to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gaine them that are under the Law, to them that are without the Law, as without Law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ, that I might gaine them that are without law, to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak, I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some, and this I do for the Gospel sake that I might be partaker thereof with you.* In this context we see what was chiefly in the Apostles eye, (even that which is the highest and faireſt marke in the world) *the saving of soules*. And that he might attaine this end, he critically observed the temper and state of his hearers, striving to frame and fute himself, and his speech accordingly, He was not the same to all, but he would be as they were to whom he spake, or with whom he did converse; yet *Paul* did not symbolize with, nor connive at any in their sins, he did not take upon him all colours, he was not a man for all men, or a man for all houres, and humors. The holy Apostle did not turn, as flatterers doe, with the times, nor fashion himself to the several garbes of men in a sinfull way; *Paul* was so farre from any such base complyances, that he having put the question, *doe I yet please men?* answers and concludes in the next words (*Gal.* 1. 10.) *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ*. But weighing the state of all men, he formed his words, and did accommodate his Ministery for their gaine, or rather for the gaining of them. Some are all things to all men, that they may gain by all, that they may advantage themselves by all (which is a spirit not onely unworthy of a Minister, but of a man) but *Paul* complyed with all, that he might gaine them, or bring them in the greatest gaine. Or he complyed with all men that Christ might gaine, and faith in him be propagated, *this I doe for the Gospel sake*. I do not this for my own sake, I do not put my self into all forms towards men for my own preferment in the world, but that Christ may,

may be preferred in the hearts and acceptations of all men with whom I have to doe, before the world. And that this was his purpose, we have his sence fully from his own pen (1 *Cor.* 10. 32, 33) *Give none offence, neither to the Jewes, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God, even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved.*

There are five things to be taken notice of, that we may utter words to profit.

First, The matter or what we speak. Those words which have no worth in themselves can never profit others While the Prophet (*Hos.* 14. 2.) exhorteth the people to repentance, He saith, *Take with you words*, that is choyce words, select words, consider what words you take with you, *when you turne to the Lord*, and plead with him for mercy, *saying, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously*. And as we are to take words with us choyse words to expresse choyse matter in when we speake to the Lord, so also in proportion when we speake to Men, as from the Lord.

Secondly, We must consider to whom we are to utter words, we must not shoot at randome, or without a marke. Some doctrines are generall, but there ought to be a speciall application of Generall doctrines. Other Doctrines are peculiar to some. We must not cast pearles before swine, nor give childrens bread to dogs. And we must be as carefull that we speak not to children, that is, to the truely Godly, as we should doe to dogs and swine (for so the Scripture calls them) prophane and ungodly men.

Thirdly, We must consider the season or time when we speak. Those words will take at one time, which will not at another. There is as much care to be had, and as much skill seene in a due timeing of our words, as of our actions.

Fourthly, We must consider the *quantum*, or the measure of words uttered. we may over lay and over-charge those to whom we speake; Every one cannot bear a strong shower of speech, or words powred out like a flood upon such *Our Doctrine* (as *Moses* said his did, *Deut.* 32 2) must *drop as the raine, our speech must distill as the dew, as the small raine upon the tender herbe, and as the showers upon the grasse.*

Fifthly, We must consider the manner in which we utter words: whether to speake as a *Barnabas*, or as a *Boanarges*, whether as a son of thunder, of wrath and judgement, or as a son of peace, of joy and consolation. *Of some have compassion* (that is, deale tenderly with them, *Jude* v. 22.) *making a difference, and others save with feare, pulling them out of the fire.* We do but cast words into the ayre, unlesse we thus make a difference in the manner of speech, as they differ to whom we speake. When we have duely weighed, the matter which, the persons to whom, the season when, the measure how much, and the manner in which we ought to speake, then we are like to speake to purpose, and shall be above this reproose which *Job* here gives *Bildad*; *To whom hast thou uttered words?*

And whose spirit came from thee?

The word which we translate *spirit*, signifyes also the *breath*; *whose spirit or whose breath came from thee?* The sense is the same.

And

First, Some interpret *Job* thus; *Whose spirit, or whose breath came from thee?* That is, Consider O *Bildad*, whose spirit moved thee, or who breathed these things into thee? whose breath or whose spirit came from thee when thou didst utter these words? so 'tis a rebuke of *Bildads* presumption, as if he had conceived himselfe wrought or acted by some extraordinary spirit, while he was speaking, or that the things which he uttered had been dropt into him by an immediate Revelation from heaven; *whose spirit came from thee?* what breath, what gale hath filled thy sayles? thou hast high conceits of thy self, as if God had spoken to thee by his spirit, or as if thou hadst spoken these things to me from his mouth But is it not rather thy owne spirit, thy owne heart which hath dictated these words unto thee? Some thinke the same spirit comes from them when they speak, which came from the holy Prophets and Apostles, who yet are deceived. The Disciples of Christ thought the same spirit came from them, which came from *Eliah* when they said (*Luke* 9 54.) *Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them as Elias did: But he turned and rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.* As if he had said in the language of *Job*, *ye know not whose spirit comes from you*; ye would speak the words of *Elias*, but ye have not the spirit of *Elias*; you have zeale but not according to knowledge; yours is but a humane affection, not a divine

vine inspiration, as *Elias* his was, his was a pure spirit of zeal, but yours is a rash spirit of revenge. And therefore your motion suits not with your calling; for as I am come, so I send you, *to save not to destroy*. We may speake the same words, and do the same things which others have done and spoken, and yet not with the same but with quite another spirit. Therefore examine *whose spirit comes from you*? This is a good and profitable sence. Yet,

Cujus anima prodijt ex te; i. e. quem consolatus es tam efficaciter sermone tuo, ut anima ejus ex mærore quasi in corpore sepulta jacebat rursum è latebris prodierit seseq; per corpus exseruerit. Pisc: Cujus animam verbis tuis vivificasti? Hebræi, Apud Merc:

Secondly, Rather thus: *Whose spirit came from thee?* that is, whose soule, or whose minde hath been recovered out of trouble and feare, out of sadnesse and sorrow by the words which thou hast spoken. Thus the spirit is taken for his to whom he spake, not for his spirit who spake, or not for the spirit with which he spake. This is a Great truth, gracious and right words, rightly applyed, do as it were relieve the spirit, and bring back the fainting, yea dead soule, from the grave of grief and sorrow, wherein it lay as buried. Now saith *Job*, *whose spirit came from thee?* Hast thou recovered or raised any languishing soul by what thou hast said? who hath felt life and power coming from thee? I am sure I have not, though I have heard thee out, and heard thee attentively. What the Moralist said of Idlenesse, the same may we say of sorrow or heaviness. *It is the buriall of a man while he liveth*. And therefore he that hath comforted a man and recovered him out of his sorrows, may be said to give him a new life, and that the spirit of such a man is come forth from him: yea, he that instructeth the ignorant, and bringeth them to the saving knowledge of God, may be said, to breath or put a soule into them. In which sence some of the Jewish writers expound that place, (*Gen.* 12. 5.) where it is said, That *Abraham tooke Sarah his wife, and Lot his Brothers son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the soules that they had gotten in Charan*, &c. that is, all those whom by good instruction and example they had gained to God, or (as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Thes.* 1. 9.) had by their meanes *turned to God from Idols to serve the living and true God*. These soules they got in *Charan*; though *Abraham* and *Sarah* were barren of naturall issue, yet they had much spirituall issue, many souls or the souls of many came from them, And therefore when *Job* would put a disparagement upon what *Bildad* had spoken, he puts him this Question, *Whose spirit or whose soul came forth from thee?* or whom hast thou *resouled*, as the Greek word which

which the Apostle useth for *refreshing*, doth elegantly signifie (*Acts* 3. 19) *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the time of refreshing* (or resouling) *shall come from the presence of the Lord*. When a man faints, or is very weary, we say he hath lost his spirits, and he is even as a man without a soule. But when in the use of any meanes he is refreshed, then we say, his spirit or soule is come to him again. The spirit of man comes onely from God in its natural constitution, he is the *father of Spirits* (Eccl: 12.7. Heb: 12. 9.) But the spirit of man may come from man in its refreshings and consolations. And therefore saith *Job* to *Bildad*, *Whose spirit came from thee?* or whom hast thou comforted? Thou hast undertaken to comfort me; but I am not comforted.

καιρὸς ἀναψύξεως.

Hence note.

Holy truths or words rightly applyed, have a relieving yea a reviving power in them.

Such words give a man his soul againe, when he hath lost it, and when he is (as it were) gone from himselfe, he is brought backe to himselfe again. For as it is said of the repenting Prodigall, *he came to himselfe*, he was gone, he was lost from himself, his soule was departed from him, his understanding was none of his, he was no more Master of any spiritually rationall faculty, then a dead man is of any meer rationall faculty; and so his father reported him whilest in that condition, *this our son was dead but is alive, he was lost, but he is found* (Luke 15.32.) Now (I say) as it is in extreame sinnings, so in extreame sorrowings and dejections of spirit, a man is lost from himselfe, he is as a dead man; and so when comfort comes in again, life may be said to come in againe; he who before was lost is found, and he who was dead revives. The word revives from a twofold death; It revives a natural man from the death of sin, and it revives a Godly man from a death in sorrow. How many spirits have come forth at the voice of the Word, out of the grave of sin. Christ foretold this resurrection of the soule by the preaching and publication of the Gospel (*Joh.* 5.25.) *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voyce of the son of God* (in the ministry of the word), *and they shall live*. And lest any should thinke that this is meant of the resurrection of the body, Christ speaks of that distinctly

(*ver.* 28.) *Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming* (he doth not say as before, *and now is*) *in the which all that are in the Graves* (dead bodies) *shall heare his voyce, and come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.* As if Christ had said, That powerfull voice (and a voice lesse powerfull then that will not doe it) which is able to raise dead bodyes, bodyes mouldered into dust, from the earth, and cause them to live again, (that voice I say) is able to raise a dead soule from a state of sin to newnesse of life. The Apostle saith as much, while he calleth the preaching of the Word *a savour of life unto life in them that are saved* (2 *Cor.* 2. 16.) They smel and tast life, even eternal life at the receiving of the Word. And as it is the meanes of conveighing life to those who are dead in sinne, so of recovering and renewing life to those who are dead in sorrow. *Worldly sorrow or the sorrow of the world worketh death* (2 Cor. 7. 10) and extreame spirituall sorrow, or the extreame sorrow of the soul about spirituals, puts us into a kind of death. Thus *Heman* spake of himself in that case (*Ps.* 88. 4, 5) *I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am as a man that hath no strength, free among the dead like the slaine that lye in the grave, whom thou remembrest no more; and they are cut off from thy hand.* As *Heman* was counted among the dead by others, so he was like a dead man in his own account too, as he speakes at the 15th verse; *I am afflicted and ready to dye, from my youth up, while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.* He was not ready to dye of bodily diseases, but of soule terrors, nor could any thing revive him, or fetch him back from that death, but the favour of God shining to him in the word of promise; how glorious is the word by the workings of the Spirit, which causeth the spirit to come forth, and maketh them who were *free among the dead*, become free among the living. This effect & fruit of the word *Job* expected from his friends before, and now from *Bildad*, but all in vaine; As their, so his discourse with *Job* was fruitlesse and ineffectuall. Much hath been spoken, but I have got nothing. I have got no spirit, no refreshing, my heart is no while cheered, nor my soule comforted, both you and the rest of your brethren, have proved *miserable comforters to me. To whom hast thou uttered words?* I am no better then if you had said nothing. *And whose spirit came from thee*, not mine, for as yet, (notwithstanding

standing all your reasonings) my spirit is not returned to me; I am as deepe in sorrow as ever I was.

There is yet another reading of this last clause of the verse given by Mr. *Broughton. And whose soule admired thee.* The same word may signifie to admire, and to come forth; because the soule or spirit of a man comes forth (as it were) to gaze upon those things and persons which he admireth. As if *Job* had said; *Possibly O Bildad, thou presumest that thou hast spoken like an Oracle of Wisdom, even much beyond the rate and proportion of ordinary men, or of what is common to man, and therefore dost expect to be applauded, yea to be admired. But whose soule is come forth by reason of thee? who hath admired thee? not I, nor do I know, that any man hath reason so to doe, unlesse it be, because thou hast so much mistaken my meaning and intention in what I said, and hast said things so improper to my condition. Some have the persons of men in admiration, because of advantage* (Jude *v.* 16.) and others desire no other advantage, but to be cryed up and had in admiration. I dare not say that *Bildad* was a man of such a spirit, though this translation (*whose soule admired thee?*) seems to charge him with such a folly.

JOB, CHAP. 26. Vers. 5, 6, 7.

Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.
Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.
He stretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

IN the former part of this Chapter, *Job* reproved the last discourse of *Bildad* as unprofitable, not that it was so in it selfe (for that was true and a great truth which he spake of the greatnesse of God) but the method which he used, and the application of it to his case made it so. *How hast thou helped him that is without power?* &c.

In this Context, and the subsequent part of the Chapter, *Job* enters upon, or reassumes the same argument or subject which *Bildad* had handled before; The power, soveraignty, and dreadfulnes of God in his works, both of Creation and providence all the world over. *Job* would let *Bildad* understand, that he was not unacquainted with the doctrin that he had prest upon him in the former Chapter. As if he had said, *Doest thou think that I know not these things, surely I can tell thee as much, yea more of the power of God then thou hast spoken, and thereby thou shalt see that I am not to learne, nor to seeke in this matter; yea I will paint and paint out the power of God not onely in the visible heavens, but in those things which lye unseene, I will goe down to the deepes, to the bottom of the mighty waters, I can tell thee that he is not onely admirable above but beneath, in so much as nothing is bred or brought forth whether animate or inanimate in the vast Ocean, but it is by his power and at his disposing. Yea I will goe as low as hell and search the power of God there; I wish also ascend up to heaven, and speak of the great things that God doth in the ayre, and in the clouds, and among the starrs, whereby you may see that I am no stranger to such divine Philosophy, and therefore this was not the poynt you should have insisted upon, or that I needed to be informed in.* That's the general scope and aime of *Job* in these words, I shall now touch upon the particulars. *Dead*

Dead things are formed from under the waters:

Jobs first instance concerning the power of God, is about things under the waters; *Dead, livelesse, inanimate* things are formed there; Properly that onely is a *dead thing* which hath sometime lived, we cannot say a stone is a dead thing, because it never had any life, neither can we say that water or earth are dead things, for they never had any life; but those things that have had life, whether vegetative, or sensitive, or rational, as man, or beasts, or plants, when once that life is withdrawne from any of them, that is properly called a dead thing. Yet in a general vulgar and improper sence, even those things that never had life may be called dead. Mr. *Broughton* renders strictly, *not dead things*, but *things without life are formed under the waters.*

The Hebrew word may come from a twofold roote, and so hath a twofold signification. First, *to heale and cure*; and in Scripture it is transferred from the healing of the body to the healing of the soul in the remission of sins, because as the wound of the body is healed by the salve, so is the soules wound, namely sinne, healed by remission or forgivenesse. The word is used in this sence (*Isa.* 6. 10.) *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their eares heavy, and shut their eyes; least they see with their eyes, and heare with their eares, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed*, that is, *pardoned*. Secondly, it signifies to be dissolved or loosened, to be weak and languishing; we translate it *dead*, because things that are dead are weakned and dissolved, and therefore death is called a dissolution; As *Paul* said (*Phil.* 1. 23.) *I desire to depart or to be dissolved*, that is, to dye; and the same phrase is used for death (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) *We know that when the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved* &c. Againe, by the figure Antiphrasis (frequent in Scripture) this word as it signifies dead and weak things, so also strong and lively things, yea those that are strongest or most lively, and therefore *Giants* who are the strongest of men, are expressed by this word (*Deut.* 2. 11.) *The Enims dwelt therein in times past, a people great and many and tall, as the Anakims, which also were accounted Giants*, &c. And the Vulgar translates so here, *Behold, the Giants groan under the waters.* Giants are called *Rephaim* in the Hebrew, which word in the roote signifies to weaken, not from their nature, but from their

רפא *dolorem mitigavit, sanavit vel fortiter pe. Metaphorâ a corpore ad animam ut sig: remittere peccata.*

רפה *debilis, dissolutus, laxus languidus.*

Ecce Gigantes gemunt sub aquis. Vulg.

their effects, not because they are weak, but because they weaken others. Giants are so strong that the very sight of them makes others weake and faint, or pulls down men of strength and might. It is said that *Saul* and the whole Army of *Israel* were dismayed when they saw *Goliah*, and greatly afraid; they were weak before the Giant. There is much labouring to make out this sence of the word here; some understand it of the Giants before the flood; *Behold, the Giants groan from under the flood.* Those Giants were indeed overthrown by the waters; and so they conceive that *Job* alluded unto them, but I shall not stay upon that interpretation.

Others expound the text of those Giants whose proper element is water, the mighty fishes of the Sea, the Whale, the Leviathan spoken of in this book of *Job*; Leviathan is a Sea-monster, a Sea Giant of huge dimensions. Natural Historians and travellers describe the vastnesse of the Whale or Leviathan, to wonder and amazement. And 'tis granted, that in these Gods power is much seene; But I shall lay by this expositon also, because (I conceive) fishes are spoken of in the next words, where they are called *the inhabitants thereof*, that is, of the Sea or waters.

Againe, this word *Rephaim* is often put for the *dead*, or those that are departed this life. (*Psal.* 88. 10.) *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee?* There are two words used for the dead in that verse, one is the ordinary word, the other is that of the Text *Solomon* (Pro 2. 18.) shewing how dangerous it is to have to do with the adultresse, saith, *Her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the* (*Rephaim or the*) *dead.* The house of Adultry and uncleanenes is the Gatehouse to death; it is not a house raised up, but bowed down, *her house inclineth unto death*, and she who is the governesse, or rather the misgovernes of the house, will by her ill life bring thee among the *dead*, even among those who are *twice dead*, corporally dead at present, and spiritually dead for ever.

But that which I shall rather pitch upon according to our translation, is that by these *dead things* are meant such things as never had any life. Mr. *Broughton* expounds his translation, *Things without life*, of those precious things that are formed under the waters *Amber and pearle and goodly stones*; These dead things are found under the waters, and there they are formed. *Gods providence reacheth to the furthest places, even to the bottome of the Sea and lowest*

רפאים

lowest earth, which seeme to be as cast off. So he glosseth, and so do other Interpreters, concluding that *Job* is here setting forth the power of God in forming minerals and precious stones under the waters or in the deepes, and so riseth in his discourse by degrees to higher things. As if he had said, *O Bildad what dost thou shewing me the power and providence of God in the high places, where he maketh peace; I can tell thee that the same power and providence of God are extended to those things which are wrought in the bowels of the earth, and at the bottome of the Sea, and so are furthest removed from our sight.*

Incipit dei providentiam & potentiam describere a rebus subterraneis in sumpis. &c.

And whereas we say. *Dead things are formed there*; that word properly signifies to bring forth children, or any living creature (*Job.* 39 1, 2.) *Knowest thou the time when the wild Goats of the rock bring forth, or canst thou marke when the Hindes doe calve? Canst thou number the moneths that they fulfil, or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?* yea The Eternal Word and Wisdome of God speakes of himselfe in the language of this Word (*Prov.* 8. 25.) *Before the mountains were setled, before the hils was I brought forth.* It signifieth also to be in paine, and groan for paine, because child bearing causeth much paine and groaning. So the word is used in a metaphoricall sence (*Deut:* 2. 25.) *This day will I begin* (saith the Lord) *to put the dread of thee, and the feare of thee upon the Nations, that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of thee*, they shall be in anguish as a woman travelling with child and pained to bring forth. Whence that translation takes its ground. *The Giants groane under the waters.* And as it signifies to forme and fashion the child or any living thing in the womb, and then to bring forth, so it is applyed to the forming of things that have no life (*Psal.* 92. 2.) *Before the mountaines were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world: even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.*

Dead things are formed.

But by whom? here is no power expresst; *Job* saith only, *they are formed*, he leaves that to be understood. And what or whom can we understand but God, or the power of God, by whom or whereby *dead things are formed* as well as living things; for all things whether animate or inanimate, receive their being and forme

forme from him; *Dead things are formed from under the waters.*

Hence note.

That all things are produced in their beings by the power of God.

Dead things as well as living things, gold and silver, minerals and gemms are formed by God as well as men or beasts. And as they were of God in Creation at the beginning, so there is a continuall putting forth of the power of God in the continuing or renewing of them, God is dayly forming rich and rare things in the secret Cabinets of the earth, and *from under the waters.*

And the inhabitants thereof.

That is, as dead things are formed under the waters, so are the *inhabitants thereof*, or those living things that dwell in the water; we put in the Margin, *with the inhabitants*: who are they? The inhabitants of the water are the fishes, they are bred and abide in the water. As if he had said, *Those precious stones and minerals, called dead things, are formed from under or in the waters as well as the fishes, who are the proper inhabitants of the water.* Mr. *Broughton* reades thus; *Dead things are formed under the waters and places neere them.* that is, in the mountains and hills, in the clifts and rocks are these precious things formed But I rather take our reading, and so the Text gives a further illustration of the power of God; who as he formeth dead things under the waters, so living things, or the inhabitants of the water.

Hence note.

The power of God is great in forming the fishes of the Sea.

And the greatnesse of it will appear if we consider three things about them.

First, Their number, as to us, the fish of the Sea are infinite in number, there is no sort of creatures that multiply so fast as fishes doe, therefore when God created the inhabitants of the water, we read (*Gen.* 1.21.) how emphatically their increase is expresst; *And God created great Whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kinde.* The waters did not bring them forth by any power of their own, but they were brought forth in the waters by that power which God had planted in the waters for that purpose. Now it is not onely

onely said that the waters brought them forth, but the waters brought them forth *abundantly*, implying that fish do multiply and bring forth more then other creatures; and therefore when the Spirit of God would shew a great increase of men, 'tis said, *They shall increase like fish* (Gen. 48 16.) *Jacob* blessing the children of *Joseph*, prayed thus; *The Angel which redeemed me from all evill, bl sse the ladds and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers, Abraham, and Isaac, and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.* The Original is, *Let them grow or multiply like fishes into a multitude in the midst of the earth*; or *let them be as numerous upon the land as fishes are in the Sea.* And we find in the sacred History how the blessing and providence of God made good this History. For of the sons of *Joseph*, *Manasseh* and *Ephraim* were numbred eighty five thousand and two hundred men meete for warre (*Num.* 26. 34 37.) which exceeded the encrease of any one Tribe beside. How wonderfully doth the Lords power appeare, not onely in those infinite sholes of lesser fishes, but in the greater also? Who is able to report the number of these Sea-inhabitants, or of the fishes who people the Sea?

Inter omnes ho-stium nihil est fœcundius pisci-bus igitur ni-si-fecerit ad mul-tiplicationem immensum.

Secondly, If we consider their various kindes, that also sheweth forth the great power of God. Naturalists observe that there is no creature upon the earth, but hath (as I may say) its representative in the Sea, besides those that have nothing like them on the earth; so various are their kindes.

Thirdly, Many of these inhabitants of the waters are wonderfull for the vastnesse and greatnesse of their bodyes; the greatest of all living creatures are in the Sea (*Psal.* 104.25) *So is this great and wide Sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable: both small and great beasts:* The Psalmist calleth the fishes beasts, and there are small beasts in the Sea and great beasts even of a stupendious greatnesse. The greatest beasts of the earth are as nothing compared to them; The Elephant is little to the Leviathan Naturalists have written much of this subject, the numerousnes, variousnes, and vastnes of these water-Inhabitants. So that we may see much of the Majesty and power of God, as in these things that are formed under the waters, so in those that are formed in the waters. *Job* descends lower yet in the next words.

Verſ. 6. *Hell is naked before him, and deſtruction hath no covering.*

'Tis queſtioned what is here meant by *hell*.

Some expound hell of the loweſt parts of the earth, ſo Maſter *Broughton*: *The loweſt earth is naked before him, and the loſt* (that is, that which ſeems to be loſt and condemned, as himſelf Gloſſeth it) *hath no covering*.

Secondly, *Hell* is often put for the grave (*Pſal.* 16. 10.) *Thou wilt not leave my ſoule* (that is, *me*) in *hell* (that is, *in the grave*) *nor wilt thou ſuffer thy holy one to ſee corruption*.

Thirdly, It is moſt uſually taken for that priſon or place of torment, where the Lord detaines all thoſe, in hold, that have rebelled againſt him, and dyed impœnitently in that rebellion, In this third ſence we may interpret it here (as I conceive) moſt ſuitably to the ſcope and purpoſe of *Job* in this place.

Hell is naked before him.

That is, it is fully diſcovered to him, he ſees who are there, and what is done there, he obſerves all paſſages there, even in that bottomleſſe pit of hell, as well as in heaven or upon the earth. As if *Job* had ſaid to *Bildad*; *You told me that God maketh peace in his high places, I tell you God hath to doe in hell, or in the loweſt places. The loweſt hell is naked before him.* The Apoſtle ſpeaketh in this phraſe (*Heb.* 4. 13.) *Neither is there any creature that is not manifeſt in his ſight: but all things are naked, and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to doe.* The words are an alluſion unto bodyes, which being ſtript, and uncloathed, all ſee what they are; there may be many deformities, blemiſhes, and ſcarrs, yea ulcers upon the body undiſcerned while 'tis cloathed or covered, but when naked nothing is hid. *All things are naked before God*, that is, he as plainly diſcernes what they are, as we diſcerne what a body is, that ſtands naked before us. Hell is called darkneſſe, and utter darkneſſe, yet it is light to God.

And deſtruction hath no covering.

Here the ſame thing is againe repeated, and 'tis uſuall in Scripture to ſpeake that in negative words, which was before ſpoken in affirmative. As *to be naked*, and *to have no covering*, are the ſame; ſo *hell* and *deſtruction* are the ſame; and theſe two are often put together (*Pro.* 15. 11.) *Hell and deſtruction are before the Lord: how much more the hearts of the children of men?* Though we know not where hell is, nor what is done there, though we know not what is become of thoſe that are deſtroyed, nor what they ſuffer, yet God doth; and if the ſecrets of hell and devills are known to him, then much more the ſecrets of the hearts of the children of men. And as that proverb teacheth us that nothing is hid from God, becauſe hell and deſtruction are not, ſo another proverb delivered in the ſame form, teacheth us, that nothing in the creature can ſatisfie the deſires and luſtings of man even as hell and deſtruction can never be ſatisfied (*Pro.* 27. 20.) *Hell and deſtruction are never full: ſo the eyes of men are never ſatisfied.* The Devil who is the great executioner of the wrath of God, is expreſt by this word; as hell is called *deſtruction* in the abſtract, ſo the Deviſ is called a *deſtroyer* in the concrete (*Rev.* 9. 11.) *And they had a King over them which is the Angel of the bottomleſſe pit* (or hel) *whoſe name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon*; both the one and the other, the Hebrew and the Greeke ſignifie the ſame thing *a deſtroyer*; The Devill, who is the Jaylour of hell, is called a *deſtroyer*, as hell it ſelfe is called *deſtruction* from the Coincidency of theſe two termes. Note.

Hell is deſtruction.

They that are once there, are loſt and loſt for ever. The reaſon why hell is called *deſtruction*, is becauſe they that are caſt to hell are undone to eternity. We read of a City (*Iſa.* 19. 18.) which was called *the City of deſtruction*, becauſe it was to be utterly deſtroyed; Hell may be called a City of deſtruction, not becauſe it ſhall ever be deſtroyed, but becauſe it ſhall ever be full of deſtruction, and nothing but deſtruction ſhall be there. There is no eſtate on earth ſo miſerable, but a man may be delivered out of it, but out of hell there is no deliverance. *Heman* ſaith (*Pſ.* 88. 11.) *Shall thy loving kindneſſe be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulneſſe in deſtruction?* There grave and deſtruction are put together, much more may hell and deſtruction be put together, or for each other. What ever comes into the grave is deſtroyed, it rots and periſheth,

much more doth hell deſtroy all that comes thither. And, looke as the grave is to the body now, a *deſtroyer conſuming*, ſo hell is to the ſoule now, and will be to ſoule and body after the reſurrection, *a deſtroyer tormenting*. The loving kindneſſe of God ſhall not be declared in Hell, nor any faithfulneſſe of his in deſtruction, unleſſe it be his faithfulneſſe (according to what is threatned in the Word) to deſtroy. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith, (1 *Epiſt.* 3 19 20) that *Chriſt by the Spirit, went and preached to the Spirits in priſon, which ſometime were diſobedient, when once the long-ſuffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah*, &c. It is true, that Chriſt by the Spirit in the miniſtery of *Noah*, did preach to thoſe Spirits who were diſobedient in the time when *Noah* preached & were in priſon (or in hel) in the time when *Peter* wrote; But Chriſt did not preach by his Spirit in the miniſtery of *Noah*, or any other way to Spirits who were in priſon (or in hel) while he preached to them. There are no Sermons in hel, nor any ſalvation there. The loving kindneſſe of God is aboundantly declared on earth, but it ſhall not be declared in hel. As there is nothing felt in hel but deſtruction, ſo there is no ſalvation offered to thoſe who are in hel. There's teares enow and mourning enough in hel, but there is not the leaſt *Godly ſorrow in hel, which onely worketh repentance to ſalvation, not to be repented of* (2 Cor. 7. 10.) One of the ancients hath reported the opinion of ſome in his time, who thought, that, though there be deſtruction in hel, yet not eternal deſtruction, but that ſinners ſhould be puniſhed, ſome a leſſe, others a longer time, and that at laſt all ſhall be freed; and yet (ſaith he) *Origen* was more merciful in this poynt then theſe men; for he held that the Devil himſelfe ſhould be ſaved at laſt. Of this opinion I ſhall ſay no more in this place, then this one thing which he there ſaid; *Theſe men will be found to erre by ſo much the more ſenſlely & againſt the right words of God ſo much the more perverſely, by how much they ſeeme to themſelves to judge more mercifully.* for indeed the juſtice of God in puniſhing ſinners is as much above the ſcale of mans thoughts, as his mercies in pardoning them are; let not ſinners flatter themſelves in a hope of ſalvation when they are in hel, who have neglected ſalvation while they were on the earth. For as the Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 2. 3.) *How ſhall we eſcape* (that is, how ſhall we eſcape falling into hel) *if we neglect ſo great ſalvation*; ſo I may ſay, how ſhall any eſcape by getting out of hell,

Auguſt lib. 21. de Civ. dei, cap. 17.

hell, who neglect ſo great ſalvation. *Hel is deſtruction*, and as becauſe heaven is a place of happineſſe and ſalvation, therefore, heaven and happineſſe, heaven and ſalvation mutually or reciprocally ſignifie one another; to obtaine heaven is to obtaine ſalvation; to obtaine heaven is to obtaine happineſſe; So becauſe hell is a place of miſery and deſtruction, therefore hell and miſery, hel and deſtruction ſignifie the ſame thing, nor can they be ſeperated.

Again, when he ſaith, *Hell is naked before him, and diſtruction hath no covering*, we learne.

There is nothing hid from the eye or knowledge of God.

Philoſophy and reaſon teach us, that the vertue and force of the heavenly bodyes, the Sunne, Moone and Starres, do not only act upon thoſe parts of the earth that are uppermoſt, but ſend their influences and powers to the loweſt parts or bowels of the earth, for (as was ſaid before) according to the ordinance of God, *dead things are formed there.* Now (I ſay) as the power of the heavenly bodyes reacheth downe into the earth, much more doth the power and light of God reach into hell it ſelf. I will not ſtay upon any curious enquiries where this hell is, whereſoever it is, God ſeeth it. *Hel is naked before him*, therefore ſaith *David* (Pſal. 139. 8.) *If I aſcend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell: behold thou art there* (that is, there thou art by thy power and inſpection; thou ſeeſt what is in hell) and if ſo, how much more doth God behold what is done here upon the earth; if hell be naked before him, then the earth is naked before him; if deſtruction have no covering, then our actions here have no covering; Hypocrites put many coverings upon their actions, they have many policies to vaile and ſcreen them from the eye of man; but the actions of men have no covering before God, yea the hearts of men have no covering before God; As *Solomon* in the *Proverbs* (which place was lately toucht upon) argues from this reaſon; becauſe *hell and deſtruction are before him* (Pro. 15. 11.) *Hell and deſtruction are before the Lord: how much more then, the hearts of the children of men.* As if he had ſaid, God who looketh into hell (which is not onely darkneſſe, but utter darkneſſe, that is, darknes without any thing that hath the leaſt ray or ſimilitude of light in it; God (I ſay) who looketh into this hel) can looke into the hearts of men much more. There are ſome men

(I grant)

(I grant) whose hearts are a very hell, a very deepe, and they hope to hide themselves in the depth of their own hearts from the sight of God, as the Prophet telleth us (*Isai.* 29. 15.) *Woe unto them that seeke deepe to hide their councell from the Lord; and their works are in the darke, and they say, who seeth us? and who knoweth us?* And what doth he meane by the deeps which they seeke? doe they seek caves and dens of the earth to take counsel or consult together in? no, they may be in the open ayre and yet seeke deepe to hide their counsels from God, so that the meaning is, they seeke to keep their counsels close lockt up in their hearts; but woe unto them that digge thus deepe to hide their counsells from God, for they cannot be hid, for even hell is before him, and destruction hath no covering, how then shall these destroyers cover themselves or any of their counsels from him? As the reason of all things is naked and manifest before God, so are the motions and actions of all persons.

Thirdly, When 'tis said, *Hell and destruction are before him*: that word *before*, doth not onely imply that God hath a view or sight of what is in hel, but also that he hath power in and over hell, and can do what he will there; *hell is naked before him*, that is, he hath hell at his dispose.

Hence note.

The power and providence of God reaches to those things that are most remote.

He orders all things in hell as well as upon the earth; his power rules there where there seems to be least order, yea where there is no order at all; They who are cast into hel kept no order while they were upon the earth, nor are they in any willing order there; when we see confusions in the world we say, *what a hell is there*, or we say, *Hell is broken loose*: hell is a place of confusion, yet hell is before God, he keepes hell in order; And when by reason of troubles and confusion among men, we are ready to say, *there is a hell in the world*, yet this hell is naked before God, he disposeth and orders those places, persons, and things, which are most confused; hell and destruction are before him.

Before I passe from these words, I shall onely take notice, that there are many words in Scripture by which hell is expreſt. The Rabbins number seven or eight, here are two.

Firſt,

Firſt, *Sheol* or the grave, because we lye as it were buried there in a second death.

Secondly, *Abaddon* or destruction, because all are there in a perishing state, or as given up into the hand of destruction.

Thirdly, Hell is called *Tsalmaveth* or the *shadow of death*, and by the *shadow of death*, is not meant a *smal appearance of death*: as the word *shadow* is used (*Jam.* 1. 17.) where the Apostle exalts the glory of the Lord in his unchangeablenes, that he is the *Father of lights, from whom every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh down, with whom is no variablenesse, neither shadow of turning*; that is, he is not subject to any turning at all; but hel is called *the shadow of death*, as shadow is put for strength and power, and so to be under the shadow of God or man, is to be under their protection. Thus *hell is the shadow of death*, that is, the strength and power of it; Death never triumphs so much in its strength, as it doth in hell.

Fourthly, Hel is called *Erets tachith*, which signifies first, *the earth under*, or the lowest and most inferiour earth, whence in Scripture hell is called *the bottomlesse pit*, and the way to it is described by descending and going down: as heaven is described by ascending and hight; heaven is high, and the highest ascending is our ascending to heaven; so hell is low, and the lowest descending is descending into hel. Secondly, it imports, *feare, vexation, and trembling*; hell is a land of trembling, it is a land of fear; it is said of *Caine* that when he went out of the presence of God, after he had murthered his brother he went into the land of *Nod*, that is, into a land of trembling, which some expound not of any special place that he went to, but that every place where he went was to him a land of trembling, he having much feare and dread upon his conscience after he had embrewed his hands in his brothers blood. Hell is indeed the land of *Nod*, a Trembling land; They who have not rejoyced with trembling in this world, shall sorrow with trembling for ever in the world to come.

Fifthly, Hell is called *Bor shiachathith*, that is, *the pit of corruption*, not that the bodyes of the damned shall corrupt in hell (as they doe in the grave, for though we cannot say that the bodies of the wicked shall *be raised incorruptible*, as the bodyes of the Saints shall, yet they shall be raised immortall, and in that sence incorruptible, that is, they shall never dye) but they shall be corruptible,

tible, that is, filthineſſe and corruption ſhall be upon them: The bodyes of Saints onely ſhall be raiſed ſo incorruptible, that nothing of corruption ſhall be ſeene upon them, or felt by them, but the bodyes of the wicked ſhall ever feele corruption, and bear the markes of it, without total corrupting, or periſhing, as corrupting and periſhing are taken for not being. The wicked would be glad that they might periſh ſo, but they ſhall not, hel will be a pit of corruption to them, for whatſoever is painfull and grievous to the fleſh, ſhall dwell in their bodyes, and therefore it is called *the pit of corruption*; and it may alſo be called *a pit of corruption* in a morall ſence, becauſe all their ſins and luſts ſhall remaine upon them for ever; hel fire cannot purge the ſoule from ſin, nor free any man from the power of that old man, who (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks *Eph.* 4. 22) *Is corrupt according to the deceitfull luſts.* Nothing but the blood of Chriſt can purge the ſoul from corruption; *Hell is for the puniſhment of corruption, but not at all for the purging of it*, and therefore it is well called, *the pit of corruption.*

Sixthly, It is called *Erets Neſciah*, that is, *the land of forgetfulneſſe*; as the grave, ſo hell is called the *land of forgetfulneſſe*, where the wicked ſhall be remembred no more; God will remember them no more, to do them any good, and they are forgotten, how much ſoever they are remembred, who are not remembred for good. And as God will not remember thoſe in hell for good, ſo they ſhall forget all the good they have had upon the earth; or the remembrance which they have of it, ſhall onely be to encreaſe their ſorrow under preſent evills. *Abraham* in the Parable (*Luke* 16.25.) ſaid to the rich man in hell, *Son remember that thou in thy life time receiveſt thy good things*; and that remembrance of the good things which he once enjoyed was but an addition to all the evills and miſeries which he then endured, *It is better never to have had any good thing, then only to remember that we have had it.* How miſerable is their condition, who ſhall neither be remembred for good, nor remember any good, but to make them more miſerable!

Seventhly, Hell is called *Erets chaſcec* that is, *a land of darkneſſe, a region of darkneſſe*; there is nothing but darkneſſe in hell; The wicked *goe to the generation of their fathers, where they ſhall never ſee light* (Pſal. 49. 19.) They loved darkneſſe here rather then

then light, and they ſhall be puniſhed with darkneſſe hereafter, which hath no light. Darkneſſe was their choice in this life, and it ſhall be their curſe in the next.

Eightly, Hel is called *Gehinon* (whence the Greeke *Gehenna*) from the valley of *Hinnon*; in which the Idolatrous *Iſraelites* (imitating the abomination of the Heathens) were wont to ſacrifice their children with horrible cruelty. And hence the Scripture often makes uſe of that word to ſignifie the place of torment, or the torments of that place, where the damned muſt abide ſeparate for ever from the favourable preſence, and ſubjected under the wrath of God. *This Hel is naked before God, and this deſtruction hath no covering.*

Verſ. 7. *He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.*

In this verſe *Job* exalts God in his Almighty power, upholding the mighty fabrick of heaven and earth. His diſcourſe mounts up from the earth, from the waters, and from hell, as high as heaven it ſelfe; and he ſpeakes of heaven and of the earth in their conjunction together.

He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place.

Bildad had ſpoken of the power of God in the heavens, *Dominion and feare are with him, he maketh peace in his high places, is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light ariſe?* *Job* alſo ſpeaks of the power of God in the creation and diſpoſition of theſe things; *He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place.* The word is ſo rendred to ſignifie a gracious act of God to regardleſſe men. (*Prov.* 1. 24.) *I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded.* God ſtretcheth out his hand to ſmite, and he ſtretcheth it out to ſave, but man layeth it not to heart. It is uſed alſo to ſignifie that powerfull act of God, in preparing the heavens for himſelfe (*Pſ.*104.2.) *Who covereſt thy ſelf with light, as with a garment: who ſtretcheſt out the heavens like a curtaine.* As we draw or ſtretch out a curtain, ſo God ſtretcheth out the heavens.

But why doth *Job* ſay, *He ſtretcheth out the North.*

I anſwer, by the North he meaneth that part of heaven that is

Northward, or the Northern heavens. Again, the North may be taken for the whole heavens by a Synechdoche: and *Job* might ſpeak of the *North* becauſe the North pole was neereſt the climate where he dwelt. *He ſtretcheth out the North or the northern heavens*, that is, the whole heavens, both the North and South, Eaſt and Weſt.

He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place.

What is this empty place?

Firſt, By *the empty place*, ſome underſtand the moſt remote and uninhabited places of the earth: He over-ſpreads them with heavens, and diſpoſeth things there as well as here, he ſpreads the heavens over thoſe parts where there is no man, & ſo may be called, Empty places, becauſe un-inhabited, or not fill'd with men. *God cauſeth it to raine on the earth where no man is, on the Wilderneſs, where there is no man* (as he ſpeaketh of himſelf to *Job* in the 38 Chapter of this book, *ver.* 26.) Now as God raineth upon thoſe (in this ſence) empty places, ſo he ſtretcheth out the heavens over theſe empty places, that is, he takes care of them as well as of thoſe that are peopled or inhabited.

Secondly, Rather, by *the empty place*, we are to underſtand the ayre, for in the natural diſpoſition or ſyſteame of the world, the earth is loweſt, the water next, the ayre is the third, and the fire fourth, over which God ſtretcheth out the heavens And becauſe nothing is viſible to us upwards on this ſide heaven but the ayre, therefore it may wel be ſaid, that he ſtretcheth out the heavens immediately over the ayre, or the empty place.

Super inane: quod juxta communem opinionẽ intelligi decet. Vulgo enim terram ſpatium a terra uſque ad cœlum vacuum putatur, quum plenum aere ſit.

But is the ayre or that place which we call the ayre empty? no, the ayre is not empty, there is no vacuity, no empty place in nature; and nature will put it ſelfe into ſtrange courſes to avoid a vacuity; water will aſcend to avoid vacuity, and it will not deſcend to avoid vacuity; but though the ayre be not empty or voide, taking emptineſſe ſtrictly and philoſophically (for every place hath its filling) yet as emptines is taken largely & vulgarly, ſo the ayre may be called an *empty place*; when we come into a roome where there is no artificial furniture, we ſay it is an empty roome: ſo the ſpace between us and the heavens in a vulgar ſence is an *empty place*. The Scripture ſpeakes often of things according to the vulgar acceptation and underſtanding. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates thus; *He ſtretcheth out the North upon the empty.* And we may conceive *Job* uſing this forme of ſpeech, the more to magnifie and ſhew forth the great power of God; As if he had ſaid, *The heavens have nothing to beare them up but an empty place, what can the ayre beare? the ayre will beare nothing; yet the Lord uſeth no ſupport for the whole heavens but this empty place.*

Thirdly, I conceive that this phraſe may be expounded barely of the Creation; For *Moſes* ſaith (*Gen.* 1. 1, 2.) *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without forme and voyd or empty.* It is the word *Tohu* uſed here in *Job*; over this *Tohu* or empty place did God at the firſt ſtretch the heavens. And as this was the work of God at firſt in Creation, ſo it his worke ſtill in providence; and therefore the Lord ſpeakes of it, as of a continued worke (*Iſa.* 44. 24.) *Thus ſaith the Lord thy redeemer &c. that ſtretcheth forth the heavens alone, and ſpreadeth abroad the earth by my ſelfe.*

Hence note.

As the heavens in creation, ſo the heavens in their dayly motion are ſtretched out and ordered by God.

(Iſaiah 40. 22.) *It is he that ſitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſs-hoppees, that ſtretcheth out the heavens as a curtaine, and ſpreadeth them out as a tent to dwel in.* The Prophet entitles God to this with a ſpecial emphaſis *It is He* that doth it; as if he had ſaid, God doth it, and none but he, and in this he eminently declares that *He is God.* Who ever ſtretched out ſuch a curtaine or canopy as the heavens? who ever pitched ſuch a tent to dwell in? This is a tent or a Tabernacle, which though it ſhall be changed, yet (as the Prophet ſpeaks of *Sion* in her beauty and glory, *Iſ.* 33 20) *Shall not be taken down, not one of the ſtakes thereof ſhall ever be removed, neither ſhall any of the cords thereof be broken.*

Againe, Conſider, the heavens have no outward ſupport; *They are ſtretched out over the empty place*; Which demonſtration of the power of God will be more cleared and hightned in the next words.

And he hangeth the earth upon nothing.

If any ſay heaven is a thin body, there needs no great matter

to keep that up. What will they ſay to the earth, which is a groſſe and heavy body, a body of an unconceivable weight, who can count or caſt up the weight of the earth, or how much the earth weigheth? God not onely ſtretcheth out the thin heavens over the empty place, *but he hangeth the earth* (that mighty maſs of the earth) *upon nothing*, he hath not ſo much as a peg in the wall (ſo the word ſignifieth) *to hang it upon.*

תָּלָה ſuſpendit. appendit.

He hangeth the earth.

When he ſaith, *the earth*, we are to underſtand both earth and water, the whole terreſtiall globe, This *he hangeth upon nothing.* The Original word is a compound, which in its parts may be rendred, *not any thing at all*, that is, *nothing.* But how can any thing be hung upon that which is nothing? if it hang, it muſt be upon ſomewhat.

et nemini omnino tuum est בְּלִי non ſy quid ja ſi ſcias n h.l put quam. D. ut

Philoſophi rationem reddunt, quod tella ſit in ſuo centro; in quo res naturaliter, quieſcant, ideoque terra ponderibus liberata ſuis quieſcat.

Philoſophers tell us that the earth hangeth upon its Center, and ſo is poyſed by its own weight, and cannot move, which Center or imaginary point is nothing.

But the Scripture ſaith the earth hath a foundation; And *David* (Pſal. 24 2.) tells us expreſſely what that foundation is; *The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſſe thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the ſeas, and eſtabliſhed it upon the floods.* According to this Scripture the Sea is the foundation of the earth & the floods are the baſis of it. How then doth *Job* affirme, that *He hangeth the earth upon nothing?* That indeed which *David* affirmes, may ſeeme very ſtrange, *that the earth ſhould be founded upon the ſea, and eſtabliſhed upon the floods*, is the ſea a fit foundation for the earth? and can that which is ſtable and unmoveable, be eſtabliſhed upon that which is the Emblеme of inſtability, floods and waters? *Jacob* ſaith of *Reuben* (Gen. 49. 4) *unſtable as water*; and can floods or waters be the whole earths eſtabliſhment? the earth is rather the foundation of the water: and many Philoſophers tell us that the ſea is higher then the earth, and therein is the power of God ſeene that he holds in the ſea as with barrs, or as with a bridle, leſt it overwhelme the earth; how is it then ſaid, *the earth is founded upon the ſea?* I anſwer, the word that we tranſlate *upon*, ſignifieth, *by, neere, together, with*, ſo, *he hath founded it upon the ſea*, is, by the ſea, or near the ſea, that is, the ſea and the land are next neighbours, they dwel ſo neer each other, that the one ſeems to dwell upon,

Super flumina eſt juxta vel ſecus flumina quia enim ter-

upon, or be the foundation of the other. There are waters within the earth; whence it is ſaid, that at the time of the Flood (*Gen.* 7. 11.) as the *windowes of heaven were opened, ſo the fountaines of the great deepe were broken up*: and we read of the waters as placed *under the earth* (Exod: 20.4) yet if we ſay the earth is upon the waters, ſence contradicts it, and if we conſider the whole globe together, we cannot ſay which is uppermoſt, for in a ſphеare or round figure, there is neither uppermoſt nor lowermoſt, but all the parts are equal and alike, being placed one by another, not one upon another. So that the text, in the *Pſalme*, which ſaith the *earth is founded upon the ſeas*, doth not at all diſh againſt nor contradict this of *Job* which ſaith, *He hangeth the earth upon nothing.*

ram iniit flumi- nibus dixerit. Drus:

Againe. There is another Scripture that ſeems to oppoſe this, and from which we may inferre, that ſurely the earth hath ſomewhat to ſuſtaine it (*Pſal.* 104. 5.) *Who layd the foundations of the earth, that it ſhould not be removed for ever.* We put in the margin, *He founded the earth upon her baſis*, if the earth be founded upon a baſis or pillar, then it doth not hang upon nothing I anſwer, the foundation or baſis, in the *Pſalme*, doth not oppoſe the earths hanging upon nothing; for the foundation or baſis which upholdeth the earth, is not any created power without, or extrinſical to the earth; God did not build the earth as we doe houſes, firſt laying the foundation and then ſetting up the wals & roofe, there is no ſuch thing imaginable in the worke of God. But the foundation or baſis of the earth, is the infinite and inviſible power of God who made the earth. The wil & word of the Builder is the pillar which ſuſtaineth this building. The thin ayre is all the appearing foundation of the earth. For as the heavens hang over the ayre, ſo the earth hangs in the midſt of the ayre. What then is the baſis and foundation of the earth? I anſwer; which may be the poynt of obſervation from theſe words.

The earth is upheld by the infinite and allmighty power of God.

The earth hath no pillar, but hangs like a ball in the ayre; we ſhould looke upon it as a miracle did we ſee a little ball but of an ounce weight hanging in the ayre without ſupport; the ayre will ſcarce a bear a feather, throw a feather up into the ayre and it wil deſcend, unleſſe kept up by a breath of winde, and yet this huge vaſt

Non fundamentis ſuis nixa ſubſiſtit terra, nec falchris ſuis ſtabilis perſeve-

rat, sed, dominus statuit terram & fundamento voluntatis suæ continet. Amb: *Hexam:* 6.

vast globe of earth and waters, hangs as a ball in the ayre, and we scarce wonder at it. The Poets fained an *Atlas* to beare up the heavens with his shoulders; God is the *Atlas* that bears up the heavens and the earth too, the upper globe, and the under globe too; he made all things by himselfe out of nothing, and he supports them by himselfe upon nothing. We have an excellent expression of the power of God in this thing (*Isa.* 40. 12.) *Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountaines in scales, and the hills in a ballance.* God made all things in weight and measure; and he keepes the weight and measure of all things. As the earth was not till his word and will gave it a being, so his word & will alone is all sufficient to uphold it in that being. God hath not hanged the earth upon any thing but himselfe, who is indeed infinitely more then all things. Take two or three deductions from this Grand Conclusion.

First, *The same power which made the world supports and maintaines it.* Thus the Author to the *Hebrews* sets forth the dignity of Christ the Son of God (Cha. 1. 2, 3.) *Whom he hath appointed heyre of all things, by whom also he made the worlds* (both the naturall, civill, and spirituall worlds, with all the changes and successions which have been in them) *who is also the brightnesse of the glory of God, and the expresse image of his person, upholding all things,* (the naturall frame of the world as wel as the civil and spiritual frame of it) *by the word of his power,* or by his powerfull word, which as it once commanded all things into a being, so now it commands all things into that continuance of their being in which they are. Which power the Apostle attributes againe to Christ (*Col.* 1. 17.) *He is before all things, and by him all things consist.* Sin made the world shake; *And had it not been for a second creation, the first creation had been ruin'd and lost.* The earth and all our concernements who live upon the face of the earth, hang upon nothing but the will of God. If he let us go we fall, though all the powers on earth would underprop and uphold us; and if he hold us up we stand fast though we have no more of any earthly power to prop us up with, then the earth hath, which is propt up with and hangeth upon nothing.

Secondly,

Secondly.

God can doe the greatest things without any visible meanes.

This worke of God in hanging the earth as it doth, is to be numbred among the greatest works that ever he did; and thus it hangs without any the least appearing means to hold it up. There are three arguments given in Scripture of the mighty power of God.

First, That he works by small, even the smallest meanes, we have reason to wonder when effects exceed al visible causes: as it shewes the great power of God when he stops great means from doing any thing, when he causeth men to labour in the very fire, that is, to toyl and sweat themselves to the utmost *for very vanity*, that is, without any hoped for issue or advantage. Some labour in the fire for very vanity, because all they get by their labours is worth nothing; but others may be said to labour in the fire for very vanity, because with all their labours they can get nothing. And *this is of the Lord*, this is an effect of the Lords power to make the power of a man, in the use and improvement of the best and choycest meanes, ineffectual. So on the other side it is a great magnifying of the power of God, when by a little power put forth by the hand of a weake instrument, he produceth great effects. The Apostle *James* brings it in with a behold (Cha. 3. 5.) *Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!* When great matters are done by small meanes, we have reason to extol and cry up the power of God.

Secondly, It argues the great power of God when he doth great things by means that are improbable, or that seem no way sutable to such an end; as Christ cured blindnesse with clay and spittle, which meanes had no sutablenesse to such an end, the curing of blindnesse; The means used to cure *Naaman* had no sutablenesse for such a cure: and *Naaman* was so sensible of it, that he was very angry with the Prophet about it, as if his leprosie could be cured by so slight a thing as that was; he thought he would have done it with some ceremony nor in an extraordinary way; yet this shewed that the cure was wrought by a divine power, because it was wrought by so improbable an application. As the power of God appears in doing great things by smal means, so by doing great things by unlikely meanes.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It shewes the power of God much more to do great things without the use of any means at all. Such actings are creatings, as the Apostle speakes of the Creation (*Heb*: 11. 3.) *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things that are seene, were not made of things that doe appeare.* Nothing appeared out of which this world was created. There was no pre-existent matter, out of which the world was made; The world was made out of nothing; That Goodly fabrick of heaven and earth which is now seen, was made of that which was never seene; no man can tell what were the materialls of which God made the world. Now as God shewed his infinite power at first in making all things of that which did not appeare, so the great power of God doth appear now in doing great things without the appearance or external concurrence of any thing. The Lord turnes whole Nations sometimes by nothing; things are done and no man can tell how they were done, or by what. We love to have a faire Appearance of means, when we attempt great matters; But God loves to act when and where nothing appeares. We honour God most, when we are sencible that the greatest means is nothing without him and that, he himselfe is enough when no meanes at all apperres to sence. *It is Gods usuall way to doe things in a way which is not used; and eyther to use no helpe or that which signifieth nothing.* Thus the Apostle describes the dealing of God in bringing souls to himself by a holy calling, and in removing whatsoever standeth in the way of that call (1 *Cor.* 1.26.) *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called*, &c. (some wise and mighty men are called, lest any thing in man should seeme too hard for the Grace of God; and not many wise and mighty men are called, lest any thing in man should seeme to contribute to or help out the call of God) *but God hath chosen foolish things to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are*; that is, those things which are so foolish and weak and base & despised, they seem to have no being, or are accounted as nothing, even these non-entityes, these poore tooles doth God chuse and take up to doe great things by, and to nullifie or bring

bring those things to nought, which are all in all among or in the estimations of men. Therefore, so God own the worke, the matter is not much (I speak not in regard of lawfulnes but likelynes, I say the matter is not much) what the means is; God can over wit wise men by fools, he can over power mighty men by those who are weak. Thus God triumphs over humane improbabilities, yea impossibilities, and would have no flesh either despaire because of the smalnes of means, or glory in his sight, because of the greatnes of it. How glorious was *Abrahams* faith in the former Chapter, who, was so far from despairing that he, was strong in faith giving glory to God, though he saw nothing but death upon all the meanes which tended to attaine the blessing promised (Rom. 4. 17, 18, 19.) *As it is written, I have made thee a father of many Nations before him whom he beleeved, even God* (who was it that *Abraham* beleeved? it was God. And under what notion did his faith eye God? even as he) *who quickneth the dead*: when God is closed with under this notion, a quickning the dead, what can be too hard for faith? but there is more in it, *Abrahams* faith eyed God not only as quickning the dead, but as he that *calleth those things which be not as though they were*: that is, as he who maketh something of nothing; when once *Abraham* had these apprehensions of God; then nothing stucke with him, his faith could digest iron, and therefore (as it followeth) *he against hope, beleeved in hope*, &c. *and being not weake in faith, he considered not his owne body being now dead* (as to the procreation of children) *when he was about an hundred yeares old, neither yet the deadnesse* (as to conception) *of Sarahs wombe. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbeliefe* (that is, he never made any scruples or queries how the promise should be accomplished) *but was strong in faith giving glory to God*, that is, glorifying God by beleeving that he was able to make good the promise, or that it was as easie for God to create a performance, as to make the promise.

Thirdly, Then *fear not when God is a working, but he will carry on his work*, deficiencies in the creature, are no stop to his actings: his immediate or sole power is enough who hangeth the earth upon nothing. Where are the pilars that sustain this mighty mass? It hangeth fast by no fastning, but the order of God; and his order is strong enough to hang the greatest busines that ever was in the

world upon. The *Jewes* have a ſaying, in reverence of the written word of God, *That upon or at every Iota or the leaſt title of the Law there hangeth a mountaine of ſence*: and 'tis as true in reference to his doings as his ſayings: God can hang mountaines upon mole-hils, and turn mountains into mole hils for his people ſake and ſafety. It is rare that we are put to the actings of faith at ſo high a rate (There is uſually ſomewhat in ſight to encourage the actings of our faith and dependance upon God, they that are in the loweſt condition, have ſomewhat to look to) but if there be nothing to be ſeene then do but remember, that *God hangeth the earth upon nothing*, and faith will ſay, *I have all. Although the meale in the Barrel, and the oyle in the cruſe ſhould fayl; Although the fig tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall there be fruit in the Vines; Although the labour of the Olive ſhall fayle, and the fields ſhall yeild no meate*, &c. yet the Lord fayleth not, either in his power for us, or compaſſions towards us, and therefore the beleever can even then rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of his ſalvation. *For while there is nothing in appearance, there is not only ſome thing, but all things are, that are for our good, in the premiſe.* Faith may make all ſorts of comfortable Concluſions to and for it ſelf (and not build Caſtles in the ayre) from this one Aſſertion, That, *The earth hangeth in the ayre*, or to give it in the words of the text, *That God hangeth the earth upon nothing. The conſtitution or ſyntaxe of Nature well conſidered, is no ſmall advantage to our hightning and ſtrengthning in grace.*

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 26. Verſ. 8, 9, 10.

He bindeth up the waters in his thicke clouds, and the cloud is not broken under him.
He holdeth backe the face of his throne, and ſpreadeth his cloud upon it.
He hath compaſſed the waters with bounds until the day and night come to an end.

JOB having ſhewed how wonderfully God upholdeth the earth which is under us, goeth on to ſhew no leſſe a wonder, in his binding up thoſe waters in clouds which are above us. Whatſoever God hath done or doth in heaven above or upon the earth beneath, either as to creation and the firſt conſtitution of things, or as to providence, and the continuall motion of things, is wonderfull and glorious.

Verſ. 8. *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds.*

As our Engliſh word, *Bind*, ſo the Original implyeth a force upon the waters to keep them within the cloud; Water would not ſtay there but that it muſt whether it wil or no It would ruſh downe preſently and diſorderly to the ruine of all below, but God bindeth it to its good behaviour. As the mouth of a ſack is tyed or bound about, that the corn put into it fall not out; Or (which alluſion comes neereſt the text) as barrels are bound with hoops, leaſt the liquor put into them ſhould leak out; thus

צרר *Colligavit vinxit compreſſit.*

God bindeth up the waters. What waters? There are two ſorts of waters; firſt, upper waters, or waters in the ayre; of which the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh when he ſaith, (*Pſal.* 104. 3.) *He layeth the beames of his chambers in the waters*; that is, in thoſe upper waters, which are neereſt the heaven, called in Scripture, *The habitation of his holineſs and of his glory.* Earthly Architects muſt have ſtrong walls to lay the beams of their chambers upon, but the Lord who made heaven and earth, can make fluid waters beare up the beames of his chambers for ever Secondly, there are lower waters, or waters on the earth; Which diſtinction *Moſes*

gave long before *Aristotle* (Gen. 1. 7.) *And God made the firmament and it divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament.* Where by the *firmament* we are to understand that vast space which is extended or stretched out from the earth up to the clouds; commonly called, *The ayre*, and by the waters above the firmament, those *rain-waters* bound up in the *clouds*, These upper waters are the waters of which our divine Philosopher here saith, that *God bindeth them up.*

עבב a עב *densitas.*

In his thick clouds. Though clouds are much thinner then the water which they hold, as Naturalists teach us, yet they are thicker then the common ayre, or they may be called *thickned ayre*, and therefore the Hebrew word for a cloud is derived from a roote that signifieth *Thickness.* And though we have a distinction of clouds into thick and thin comparing one with another, yet all clouds compared to the ayre are thick, and compared to the waters all are thinne; Besides the Hebrew word signifies clouds indifferently as well thinne as thicke, or rather clouds Generally without any determination or restriction either to thick or thinne. And therefore the text is best translated without an Epithete, *In his clouds*, or if any Epithete were given, It would advance *Jobs* scope and purpose most to translate it, *In his thinne clouds*; for, the thinner the cloud is, the greater is the power of God, and the wonder the more wonderfull in making them the Continent of such mighty waters. But, we translate wel, *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds.*

It may here be enquired, why the clouds are appropriated unto God in such a special manner, by calling them, *His clouds.*

I answer, the clouds are *His*, not onely

First, In that common sence (in which all things in the world are his) because he maketh and disposeth of them for that use, to hold the waters which the heat of the Sun exhaleth or draweth up in vapours from the earth; But they are called his clouds.

Secondly, Because God is said to use them as Princes do Horses of State or Charets of triumph to ride upon (Isa. 19. 1.) *Behold the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud*, as also because, the Lord, to shew the unsearchablenes and incomprehensiblenes of his wayes and counsells in governing this world, and in ordering the affairs of his chosen people, is often expressed in Scripture as dwelling in a

a cloud, or covering himselfe with clouds (*Psal.* 18. 11.) *He made darknes his secret place: his pavilion round about him, were darke waters, and thick clouds of the skies* And againe, it is no sooner said (*Psal.* 97. 1.) *The Lord reigneth*, but in the very next verse it is said, *Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousnes and Judgement are the habitation of his throane*; that is, his administrations are alwayes full of righteousness, though seldome full of clearness, they are alwayes cloathed with equity, though usually cloathed with obscurity. His way and his dwelling is in the clouds; and therefore also the clouds *are his.* *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds.* Some Philosophers hold that the cloud doth not so much hold the water, as is water, and that the cloud is dissolved into water when it raineth. others that the clouds hold water like a spunge, which being pressed, yeelds it out againe. But *Jobs* Philosophy lifts up the glory of God most, which maketh the cloud as a vessel or garment, in which the waters are bound, and yet see the wonder.

The cloud is not rent under them.

בקע *discidit rupit, secuit in duas partes, usurpatur dequavis violēta ruptione aut segregatione rerum ante hac cohærentium.*

The waters being of a mighty bulke and weight, might easily break their way through the clouds, did not God both bind and ballance them (as *Elihu* speakes, Chap. 37. 16.) *Dost thou know the ballancing of the clouds*; To his ballancing to his binding we must ascribe the *not renting of the cloud.* As *binding* in the former clause, noted an act of power and force in God; so this word *renting*, noteth a power and force the inwater. It is said (*Ps.* 78. 13.) God rent *or divided the Sea*, that his people might passe through; And this word is used (1 *Chron.* 11. 18.) concerning those mighty men who fetched *David* water from the wel of *Bethlem*; *And the three break through the host of the Philistines.* And thus would the waters naturally break through the clouds, but they are forbidden; The cloud is not rent under all that weight, for God holds it together, and makes it as firme as brasse.

Hence observe.

It is an eminent a wonderfull act of divine power by which the waters are contained and stayed within the clouds.

The mighty power of God is seen in keeping the waters of the Sea

Sea in compaſſe by the ſands and ſhoares; but it is a greater act of power to keep the waters of the ayre in compaſſe by the clouds. There are three things very wonderfull, or there are three wonders in this detention of the waters.

First, That the waters which are a fluid body, and love to be continually flowing and diffuſing themſelves, ſhould yet be ſtopt and ſtayd together by a cloud, which is a thinner and ſo a more fluid body then the water. It is no great matter to ſee water kept in conduits of ſtone, or in veſſels of wood and braſs, becauſe theſe are firme and ſolid bodyes, ſuch as the water cannot penetrate, nor force it ſelfe through; but in the judgement of nature, how improbable is it that a thinne cloud ſhould beare ſuch a weight and power of waters, and yet not rent nor breake under them. When *Peter* had enclozed a multitude of great fiſhes in his net, even an hundred fifty and three (*Joh.* 21. 11.) we find this added as a wonder, *And for all there were ſo many, yet was not the net broken.* How much more may this be added as a wonder, that ſuch a multitude of waters ſhould be held in a cloud, and yet the cloud not broken, yea though the cloud be toſſed & driven with fierce and raging winds. This is one of thoſe wonders in nature, which is therefore onely not wondred at becauſe it is ſo common; and, which becauſe it is continually done, few enquire into or admire the power by which it is done.

Hoc ſane eſt ex illis naturæ mirabilibus, quæ aſſiduitate vilescunt.

Secondly, As it is wonder that the cloud is not rent with the weight of the water, ſo that the cloud is rent at the ſpeciall order and command of God. At his word it is that the clouds are lockt up, and by his word they are opened. As in ſpiritualls, ſo alſo in naturals, *He openeth and no man ſhutt th, he ſhutteth and no man openeth* It is not in the power of all the world to rent or open a cloud (though the earth be parcht and all things that live languiſh) till God unlocke it.

Nulla gutta deſcendit nisi illis dantes verbum ejus de nubibus illis, et pluvias. Moles Gentium.

Thirdly, This alſo is wonderfull, that when at the word of God the cloud rents, yet the waters do not guſh out like a violent flood all at once, which would quickly drown the earth as it did (*Gen.* 7. 11.) *When the windowes of heaven were opened*; but the water deſcends in ſweete moderate ſhowers (as water through a Cullender, drop by drop and ſtream by ſtream) for the moyſtning and refreſhing of the earth. And God caryeth the clouds up and downe the world (as the keeper of a Garden doth his watering

ing pot) and bids them diſtill upon this or that place, as himſelfe directeth. The clouds are compared to bottles in the 38 Chapter of this book (*v.* 37.) theſe God ſtops or unſtops uſually as our need requireth, and ſometime as our ſin deſerveth (*Amos* 4. 7.) *I have withholden the rain from you*, and he can withhold it, till the heavens over us ſhall be as braſſe, and the earth under us as iron. *I* (ſaith the Lord of his vineyard, *Iſa.* 5. 6) *will alſo command the clouds that they raine no raine upon it.* The Reader may finde further diſcoveries about this poynt at the 5. Chapter, *v.* 10. Onely here I ſhall adde.

First, That we depend upon God not onely for grace, and pardon of ſinne, but for raine and fruitful ſeaſons.

Secondly, When we have raine, let us acknowledge that God hath rent the cloud and given it us: that he hath looſed the *Garment wherein he hath bound the waters* (Pro. 30. 4) that they may iſſue down upon us.

Thirdly, When the cloud rents not, let us goe to God to do it. *Are there any among the vanities of the Heathen that can cauſe raine?* Surely there are none (*Jer.* 14. 22.) And therefore the Prophet (*Zech.* 10. 1.) ſends the people of God to him for it. *Aske ye of the Lord raine in the time of the latter rain, ſo the Lord ſhall make bright clouds, and give them ſhowers of raine, to every one graſſe in the field.* Only he who bindeth up the waters in his clouds, can unbinde the clouds and cauſe them to ſend out their waters. *Job* having thus ſhewed the power of God among the clouds and upper waters, riſeth yet higher in his diſcourſe, and from theſe waters wherein (as we touch'd before) God layeth the beames of his chambers, he aſcendeth to the chambers themſelves, even to the throne of God there.

Verſ. 9. *He holdeth backe the face of his Throne, and ſpreadeth his cloud upon it.*

There are three things to be enquired into, for the explication of the former part of this verſe.

First, What is here meant by the *Throne of God.*

Secondly, What, by the *face of his Throne.*

Thirdly, What, *by holding it back.*

To the firſt Query, I anſwer. That according to Scripture, Heaven

Heaven or that place above, in oppolition to the earth, or this sublunary world, is called the throne of God; and that not the inferiour heaven, or ayre, (which in Scripture is more then once called heaven) but the supreame or highest heavens: Thus the Lord speaketh by the Prophet (*Isa.* 66. 1.) *The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstoole, where is the house that ye build unto me*, &c. Thus also our Savior in his admonition against swearing (*Matth.* 5. 34.) saith, *Swear not at all*, (that is rashly) *either by heaven, for it is Gods throne, nor by the earth for it his footstoole*, Againe (*Mat.* 23. 22.) *He that sweareth by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God.* The reason why heaven is called the *throne of God*, is, because there he manifests himselfe, as Princes do upon their thrones in greatest glory and majesty: as also because there he is more fully enjoyed by glorified Saints and Angels. God fills heaven and earth with his presence, yet he declares his presence more in heaven then here upon the earth. Heaven is the throne of God, but

Quidam faciem esse hominis tantum os tantum & oculos et genas quod Graeci prosopon dicunt, quando facies sit forma omnis et modus et fabrica quadam totius corporis a faciendo dicta, sic in mentis & cœli & Maris facies probe dicitur. Gel. lib. 13. c. 28

Secondly, What is the *face of his throne?*

I answer; The face of a thing is taken for the whole outward appearance, or for the appearing state of it. As the face of a mans body is not onely that fore-part of the head, which we strictly call so, but the forme and structure of the whole body is the face of it. And in that sence the word is applyed both to those great natural bodyes, the Heaven and the earth, as also to a civill body, or to the Body-Politick of a City and Common-wealth. Thus whereas we render (*Isa.* 24. 1.) *Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside downe*, &c. The Hebrew is (and so our translaters put in the margin) *he perverteth the face thereof*; that is, he changeth the state and outward form of things, and putteth them into a new mould or model, respecting order and Government. And so we commonly speak after great publick changes, *The very face of things* is altered, *or things have a new face.* And thus the Psalmist expresseth the gracious & favourable changes which God maketh in the things of this world (*Psal* 104. 30) *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth*; that is, all things appear in another hiew and fashion then before. So then, *the face of the Throne of God*, is that part of heaven (say some) which looketh towards us, or which we looke upon; All that Greatness

Cœli vultus est cœli superficies concava stellata, quae nos respicit. Albert:

Greatness and beauty of heaven which our eye reacheth unto, and which appeares to us as a vast Canopy set with spangles or studs of Gold, such are the Starres to our sight But I rather conceive, *The face of the throne of God to be*, the visible and full demonstration of that infinite light and glory wherein God dwelleth, and which appeareth or is given forth to the blessed Saints and Angels, who are said to be about his throne according to their measure & capability of receiving it. The face of his throne, taken thus, he holdeth backe from us alwayes in this life, and as the face of his throne is taken in the other sence, he often holds it backe from us. About which it remains to be enquired.

Thirdly, What is meant by *holding backe the face of his throne.*

To *hold backe*, seemes to be the same, as to hide, cover, or conceale the face of his throne; for when any thing is held back, it is concealed and hidden out of sight. Thus God doth often hold back or cover the face of his throne (as the face of it notes the Appearances of heaven towards us) with clouds; as it is said in the report made of that terrible storme wherein *Paul* had almost suffered shipwracke (*Acts* 27. 20.) *That neither Sun nor Starres in many dayes appeared*; here was a holding back or covering of the face of the throne of God. And thus our experiences have often found it held backe; the face of heaven, being masked or vayled over with natural clouds and vapors. Again, if we take the face of the throne of God, for that eminent manifestation of himselfe, as in heaven. Thus also God holdeth back the face of his throne, by covering it with a Metaphorical cloud; as it is expressed (*Psal.* 97. 1, 2.) *The Lord reigneth* &c. *clouds and darknesse are round about him*, that is, we can see no more of his glory in reigning then we can see of a Kings throne which is covered with a Canopy, and compassed about with curtaines. *Job* gives this plainly for the interpretation of this former part of the verse in the latter part of it.

Est tollere apparentiam cœli. Cajet.

Tenere faciem throni, est cœlum occultare et obducere nubibus.

And spreadeth his cloud upon it.

That is, *upon the face of his throne.* We may take this cloud, first properly, thus God covers the heavens from the sight of our eyes. Secondly, improperly, as clouds note only secrecy and privacy; Thus God spreadeth a cloud upon his throne, to hide it from

from the eye of our understanding; so that we can no more comprehend the glory of God in himselfe or in his wayes and workings towards man, then we can see the Sunne, Moon, and Starres, when muffled and wrapt up in thicke clouds. Thus *David* speaketh of the Lord (*Psal.* 18. 11.) *He made darknesse his secret place: his pavilion round about him, were dark waters and thick clouds of the skyes.* But the Apostle saith (1 *Tim.* 6. 16) *That God dwelleth in light.* How then doth the Psalmist say there and elsewhere that he made clouds and darkness his secret place and his pavilion? I answer, As the Lord *is light and hath no darknesse at all in him* (*John* 1. 5) so, as to himselfe, he ever dwelleth in light, and hath no clouds nor darknesse at all about him. And therefore when it is said, that he spreadeth a cloud upon his throne, and maketh darknesse his secret place, or his secret place darke, we are to understand it in reference to our selves; for whensoever God hideth himselfe, or the reason of his dealings and dispensations from us, Then the cloud is spread upon his Throne. When God is said to spread a cloud over us, or any thing we have, it noteth his care over us, and his protection of us (*Isa.* 4. 5.) *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblyes a cloud and smoake by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night* (what is meant both by this cloud and flaming fire is clearly expounded in the last words of the verse) *for upon all the glory shall be a defence* (or a covering) Thus, I say, a cloud spread by God upon us, implyeth that we are under his covert and defence. But when God spreadeth a cloud upon or covereth himselfe with a cloud, this implyeth (all the Scripture over) the hiding and concealing of himself and his works from us. And in this sence *Job* saith; *He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth a cloud upon it.*

Hence note.

First, *God hath a throne.*

Kings have thrones, much more hath God who is the *King of kings. King Solomon made himselfe a great throne of Ivory, and overlayd it with the best gold* (1 Kings 10 18.) Kings have formall Thrones, God hath a real one. He hath all power in his hand, and this he administreth according to the pleasure of his own will both in heaven and earth.

Note.

Note.

Secondly, *God manifesteth himselfe in heaven, as Princes upon their thrones*; so heaven is the throne of God. And where God acts most, our affections should be most, and our conversation most. Where the Throne is, thither the great resort is, many flocke to the Court. As it will be our glory hereafter to be in heaven, or about the throne of God for ever in person, so it is our grace to be daily there in Spirit while we are here. The earth is Gods footstoole, yet many make that their throne; Heaven is Gods throne, and many make that their footstoole; They tread and trample upon the things of heaven, while they set their hearts upon the things of the earth. 'Tis a sad mistake, when men set their feete where they should set their hearts, and prophane the throne of God, not onely by levelling it with, but by laying it lower then the ground.

Observe.

Thirdly, *God hideth his owne glory from the sight of man. He holdeth backe the face of his throne*, he will not suffer the lustre of it to appeare, but spreadeth a cloud upon it. Indeed we are not able to bear the clear discoveries of divine Glory (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) *God dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto*, though he were permitted and offered the priviledge to approach unto it. God dwelleth in and is possessed of that infinite perfection of light that no creature is capable of. When *Moses* made that petition to God (*Exod.* 33. 18.) *I beseech thee shew me thy glory.* The Lord answered (*v.* 20.) *Thou canst not see my face, for no man shall see me and live.* It seems that while God spake with *Moses* his glory was overshadowed, or that God (to use *Jobs* language in the text) *held back the face of his throne, and spread a cloud upon it*; and therefore *Moses* begg'd the removall of it, or that his glory might break through it, and shine unto him; *Wel*, saith God, *thou canst not see my face*; as if he had said, *If I should grant thee that request, thou art not able to enjoy it, or make use of it; for as my nature is altogether invisible, so thou canst not bear the super excelling brightnesse, which the cleare manifestations of my immediate presence would dart forth upon thee; for that Glory of my presence is too great a weight for humane fraylty to stand under; it would astonish rather then comfort thee, and in stead of refreshing confound and make thee as a dead man. No man shall see my face and*

live. Man muſt dye before he can (in that ſence) ſee the face of God, and then he ſhall (as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12.) *ſee face to face, and know as he is knowne.* So that though we are much ſhort of the happineſſe of the next life, while we ſee as through a glaſſe darkly, and God holdeth back the face of his throne, yet it is a mercy to us while we are in this life that he doth ſo, becauſe we are not able to abide the ſight of him face to face, or to behold the face of his throne. As Chriſt had many things to ſay to his Diſciples, which they were not then able to beare; ſo Chriſt hath purchaſed ſuch mercies & priviledges for his people, as they are not able to beare while they are on this ſide the grave, *Every ſtate hath enjoyments ſuitable and proper to it.* Further as God hideth his glory from man, becauſe he is not able to beare it all; ſo he hideth much of that from him which he is able to beare, both to make him hunger and thirſt the more after it, and to draw him into the greater reverence and eſtimation of it. We uſually eſteem that more which is veyled and under a cloud, then that which is very cleare and openly revealed; and according to our preſent ſtate and frame, that is moſt reverenced by us, which is moſt concealed from us. When a cloud hath dwelt a while upon the Sun we deſire the more to ſee the face of it, and are the more affected with the ſight of it. God will not hold back the face of his throne from us in glory, nor will he ever ſpread a cloud upon it, & yet we ſhall have freſh deſires after it, and high valuations of it everlaſtingly; But while we dwel in this corrupt and corruptible fleſh, we are âpt to neglect that which is alwayes with us, eſpecially if it be alwayes alike with us. And therefore as the wiſe and gracious God, will not let us ſee his throne here at all in the full glory of it, becauſe we cannot bear it, ſo he will not let us ſee that glory of it continually, which we are able to beare, leſt we ſhould grow either careleſſe of it, or unthankfull for it. It is even beſt for us, that we have but a darke and imperfect ſight of God in this world, both in reference to what he is, and to what he doth: or firſt, in reference to himſelfe in his nature and excellencies. Secondly, in reference to his wayes or workes in their ſpecial reaſons and ends. As our darknes cannot at all comprehend the light of God, ſo God is pleaſed to cover much of his own light with darknes that we ſhould not comprehend it. How many glorious truths are there, the face of which he

he holdeth backe from many of his precious ſervants? how often doth he ſpread a cloud as upon the truths which he ſendeth in his Word, ſo upon the graces which he hath wrought in us by his Spirit? ſo that the ſoul is not onely hindred from beholding what is without, but what is within, and is ſo farre from beholding the glorious perfection of God and his works abroad, that it cannot ſo much as diſcerne any of the gracious works of God at home. *He ſpreadeth his cloud upon it.*

Verſ. 10. *He compaſſeth the waters with bounds, untill the day and night come to an end.*

Job having deſcribed marvellous acts of divine power in the heavens deſcends againe to ſhew his marvailes in or about the Seas and mighty waters.

He compaſſeth the waters with bounds.

The word which we render *to compaſſe*, ſignifieth properly to draw a line, or make a circle, as Mathematicians do with a paire of Compaſſes, ſo that it notes the ſhutting up or circumſcribing any thing to a certain place or meaſure, beyond which it cannot move. And thus God compaſſeth the waters. At the 8. verſe *Job* ſhewed how God compaſſeth the upper waters, the waters in the ayre, *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds.* Here he ſheweth, how God by the ſame almighty power compaſſeth about the lower waters, the waters of the Sea. The Hebrew is, *The face of the waters*, as in the former verſe, *The face of his throne.* The face of the earth is the upper part of the earth (*Gen.* 1. 29.) *I have given you every hearbe bearing (or ſeeding) ſeed, which is upon the face of all the earth.* And ſo *the face of the waters*, is the upper part of the waters; becauſe the upper part of the water, as alſo of the earth lyeth open to the eye as the face of a man doth. And it may therefore be ſaid that he compaſſeth the face of the waters, becauſe (though the whole body and bulk of the waters ſwel and rage, yet) the face or upper part of the waters is that which at any times breaketh over and overfloweth; And therefore the face of the waters, onely, as to us, *is compaſſed about with bounds.*

Proprietas peculiaris verbi חוג *eſt lineam vel circulum deſcribere quaſi circino. Forte etiam in dicatur eodem circumdandi verbo unum effici globum ex terra et aqua atq; unum & idem utriuſq; elementi eſſe centrum.* Pined:

The word noteth, a legal bound, a ſtatute or decree, and is frequently uſed in Scripture, eſpecially in the 119. *Pſalme*, for the Law.

חק *ſtatutum conſtitutio, decretum; ſignifi-*

eat præcipi constantiam & durationem in re pprie est incidere lapidi ligno vel Metallo unde Septu:

Law or rule which God hath given man both for his worship and continuall course of life. And hence the Prophet *Jeremiah* speaking to the *Jewes* about this thing, useth another word to signifie the bound of the Sea, and the word which here we render *Bound*, is there rendred *decree* (Jer. 5 22.) *Feare ye not me saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual decree that it cannot passe it.* And there is so much of a Law, or of an appointment in it, that the word is applicable to any thing which is put under a certain law or appointment. So it is put for an appointed time in the 14. Chapter of this booke (*v.* 13.) and for appointed foode in the 23 Chapter of this booke (*v.* 12.) as here for an appointed space or circle, within which as within a wall, or with gates and barrs the waters of the Sea are kept. *He compasseth the waters with bounds.*

Hence Note.

First, *The Sea is bounded by the power of God.*

As God hath given man understanding to provide a bit and a bridle for the mouth of the horse and mule, which have no understanding, *lest they come neer unto him* (Ps. 32. 9) that is, neerer to him then they should, or neere to him, not to serve him, or be used by him, but to kick him or tread upon him; Thus God himselfe who is infinite in understanding, hath put a bit or bridle into the mouth of the Sea, which is further from understanding then either Horse or mule, lest it come neer to drown and overwhelm us. Neither shoares nor sands, neither cliffs nor rocks are the bound and bridle of the Sea, but the Decree and command of God.

Observe.

Secondly, *It is an unanswerable argument of the glorious power and soveraignty of God, that he is able to compasse the waters with bounds.*

Who shut up the Sea with doores? (was Gods humbling Question to *Job* in the 38. Chapter of this book, *v.* 8. 10. 11.) *and said, hitherto shalt thou come and no further, & here shall thy proud waves be stayed.* The Psalmist (*Ps.* 104.) having shewed how at first (*Gen.* 1. 1.) the whole earth was covered with the deep as with

with a garment, and that the waters stood above the mountains, and were in the progresse of the work of creation sent down by the valleyes into the place which God had appointed for them, (having I say, made this excellent description of the waters in creation, he concludes with the poynt of providence now in hand (*v.* 9) *Thou hast set a bound, that they may not passe over: that they turne not againe to cover the earth.* In which words the Psalmist gives us three things clearely concerning the waters. First, that once (he means it not of the deluge, but of the chaos) the waters did cover the whole earth, till God by a word of command sent them into their proper channels, that the dry Land might appeare. Secondly, that the waters have a natural propension to returne back and cover the earth againe. Thirdly, that the onely reason why they doe not returne backe and cover the whole earth, is, because God hath *set a bound, that they cannot passe.* They would be boundlesse and know no limits, did not God bound and limit them. Wisdome giveth us the like Elogium of the power of God in this (*Pro.* 8. 29.) *He gave to the Sea his decree, that the waters should not passe his commandement.* What cannot he command, who sendeth his commandement to the Sea and is obeyed? Some great Princes heated with rage and and drunken with pride, have cast shackles into the Sea as threatning it with imprisonment and bondage if it would not be quiet; but the Sea would not be bound by them; They have also awarded so many strokes to be given the Sea as a punishment of its contumacy and rebellion against either their commands or their designes. How ridiculously ambitious have they been, who would needs pretend to such a Dominion? Many Princes have had great power at and upon the Sea, but there was never any Prince had any power over the Sea; That's a flower belonging to no Crown, but the Crown of heaven. There are two things which are more peculiarly under the command of God, first, the waves of the Sea, secondly, the heart of man. And because God is able to rule the waves of the Sea, take two or three inferences from it; Thus,

First, That he is able to rule and command the heart of man; *Solomon* makes the parallel in this (*Pro.* 21. 1.) *The kings heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters: he turneth it whether soever he will.* And as he turneth it both whether soever he will,

will, so he stayeth both wheresoever he will. Most men at some times, some (wicked) *men at all times are like the raging Sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt* (Isa. 57.20.) who could live by these raging Seas, these raging waves of the Sea at once foaming out their owne shame, and threatning to swallow up others in destruction, did not God compasse them about with bounds? did not he say, here shall your proud waves be stayed. If God did not bound the Sea of some mens Spirits, they would not know much lesse keepe any bounds; they would neither know nor keep, not onely the bounds of religion and piety, but not the bounds of reason and civility.

Secondly, God is able to rule and put a bound to the rage of the multitude, who in Scripture are compared to waters (*Rev.* 17. 15.) *The waters which thou sawest, where the Whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and Nations, and tongues.* And these are as apt to swel and be enraged with vain passions and discontents, as the Sea is by winds and stormes (*Psal.* 2. 1.) *Why do the heathen rage?* rage as the sea; and thus they will rage sometimes though they know neither why nor wherefore. (So again *Psal.* 93. 3, 4.) *The floods have lifted up O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice: the floods lift up their waves*, which as it is true literally and properly, so it is as true (and so I conceive there intended) figuratively and improperly or mystically and spiritually that is, peoples and Nations like floods lift up their voice, they lift up their waves as if they would overwhelm all; But what followeth (*v.* 4.) *The Lord on high is mightier then the noise of many waters, yea then the mighty waves of the Sea*, that is, the Lord can quickly check and stop the rage of a people, when or though they swel like a furious boysterous Sea. And we finde *David* putting both these together by way of Exposition (*Psal.* 65) where exalting the power of God as he is *the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afarre off upon the sea* (*v.* 5.) He addeth (*v.* 6 7.) *Which by his strength setteth fast the mountaines: being girded with power. Which stilleth the noise of the seas; the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.* *David* joynes the noyse and waves of the Seas, and the tumult of the people together; either implying, that he meant the tumult of the people, by the noyse of the Sea; or that it is an act of the same power, to still the tumult of the people, and the noise of the Sea;

Thirdly,

Thirdly, God is able to stop those Seas of error, and give a bound to those floods of false doctrine, which are ready to overflow the face of the world. The Sea or flood of the Arrian heresie (which denyed the Deity of Christ, or made him barely a man by nature, onely cloathed with wonderful powers and priviledges, this heresie, I say, like a sea or flood) had almost overwhelmed the whole world; yet God compassed those *Blacke* waters with bounds, and gave them a commandement which they could not passe: and though in this age they seeme to returne, and strive to over flow the earth againe, yet both the waters of that heresie and of all other damnable heresies (as the Apostle *Peter* calls them 2 *Ep.* 2. 1.) which abound in these dayes, and threaten us with a fearefull inundation, are compassed with bounds which they shall not exceed. The Apostle speaketh of some in his time, (2 *Tim.* 3. 8, 9) *Who as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so did they also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate* (or as we put in the Margin, *of no judgement*) *concerning the truth. But they shall proceed no further*; So the Apostle propheced of them; as if he had said; They have a mind to proceed further, their will is to oppose truth and propagate error (in infinitum) without end But they have now gone to the utmost of their line, they are come to their border, to their bound; *they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest unto all men, as theirs also was*; that is, it shall appeare to all men that the doctrine which they stood up for, was nothing else but a bundle of folly, and that the doctrine which they withstood was the truth and wisdome of God.

Fourthly, Then, the Lord is able to stop and bound the floods, the seas of affliction, trouble, and persecution, which are ready to swallow up his Church and people. The Church blesseth God for her deliverance from troubles, under this Allegorie of Waters (*Psal.* 124. 2, 3, 4, 5) *If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side, when men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up quicke, when their wrath was kindled against us, then the waters had overwhelmed us, the streame had gone over our soule, then the proud waters had gone over our soule.* Waters, streames, proud waters are nothing else but the persecuting spirit and proceedings of ungodly enemies. And why did not these lay all waste? God would not suffer them. When *the Serpent* (Rev: 12. 15, 16.)

 cast

cast out of his mouth waters as a flood over the woman (that is, stirred up many troubles) *that he might cause her to be carryed away* (that is, utterly ruin'd) *of the flood. The earth helped the woman* (saith the text) that is (as is conceaved) God made earthly men, by the use of earthly means, and for the attaining of earthly ends, as a bound to stop those waters, or as a gulfe to swallow up those waters which should have swallowed up the Church. All these things doth he, and we may be fully assured he can do all these things, and many more, *who hath compassed the waters with bounds* yea we may be assured that he will continue to them, because as he hath, so he will *compasse the waters with bounds,*

Untill the day and night come to an end, or as our Marginal reading hath it, *until the end of light with darknesse.*

This last clause of the verse is a proverbiall speech, signifying perpetuity; or that such a thing either shall not be at all, or shall be as long as the world lasteth.

But shall day and night, light and darknes end when the world or this frame or constitution of things endeth? Will there not be day and light, or an eternal day of light in the heavenly Glory? is not that called, *An inheritance among the Saints in light?* (Col. 1. 12.) And will there not be night and darknesse, or an eternal night of darknes in hellish misery? is not that called utter darknesse? How then is it said here *that day and night shall come to an end?*

I answer. Though after the end of this world there shall be both day and night, light and darknesse, yet there shall be no vicissitude of day and night, as there is in this present world and as 'tis promised there shall be to the end of this world (*Gen.* 8. 22.) *While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest and cold and heat and summer and winter and day and night shall not cease.* These are called the *Ordinances of the day and of the night*, & the stability of them is made the shadow of that stability of God to his gracious promise, that *the seed of Israel should not cease from being a nation before him for ever* (Jer. 31. 35. 36.) In this world, light and darknes day and night are coming and going, departing and returning continually; And in this sence day and night shall come to an end, at the worlds end. *Job* speaks of day and night in course and succession, not of day and night in being or constitution, when he saith, *he hath compassed the waters with bounds, untill the day and night come to an end.* The Hebrew strictly translated makes this resolution of the doubt more cleare and doubtlesse; for that doth not say absolutely *that day and night* (*light or darknesse*) *shall come to an end*; but that there *shall be an end of light with darknesse*; that is, of the intercourse or change between day and night, between light and darknes; or *untill the consummation of light with darknesse*, that is, until light and darknesse have consummated or fulfilled their course one with another.

Ad consummationē lucis cum tenebris. Jun:

Hence observe.

First, *Beyond this world there are no changes of times or seasons,*

In the world to come all is day & light to the Godly, to those who dye in the Lord, and all is night and darknesse to the wicked, to those who dye out of the Lord. Heaven and hell, a state of eternal Blessednesse or wretchednesse, have no changes in them, nor any thing that is Heterogenal or of another kind. Heaven which hath light and joy in it, hath no darknesse, no sorrow at all in it; Hell which hath darknesse and sorrow in it, hath no light nor joy at all in it; The mixtures and changes of light and darknesse of joy and sorrow, of paine and pleasure, are made here on earth. The wine of the wrath of God, and the wine of the love and consolations of God shall be powred out without any the least contrary tincture or mixture in the life which is to come. Light with darknesse shall no more be heard of, They who goe into light shall never see darknesse, and they who goe into darknesse shall never see light. We are now (as *Job* speaks in the 14. Chapter of this booke, *v.* 14.) *Waiting all the dayes of our appointed time untill our change come*, and when that change is once fully come, we shall goe beyond all changes; *Day with night will then be at an end.*

Secondly, Observe.

What God doth he can always doe.

As he hath hitherto compassed the waters with bounds, so he can compasse them with bounds untill the day and night come to an end. Men can doe that to day, which they are so far from being able to doe untill the end of dayes, that, possibly they cannot do it the next day. The hand of man is continually shortning

in regard of naturall ſtrength or activity, and it ſeldome keeps long at the ſame length in regard of civil ſtrength or Authority. As there are many things which man cannot nor ever could do, ſo there are many things, which once a man could doe, but now he cannot. He is changed or the times are changed, either he hath not the ſame power in himſelfe, or the ſame powers are not continued unto him. That man may be found ſhaking and trembling, who a while before (as 'tis ſaid of the Aſſyrian, *Iſa*: 14. 16.) *made the earth to tremble, and did ſhake kingdomes*, inſomuch that all (as 'tis at the 10. verſe of the ſame Chapter) ſhall ſpeak and ſay unto him *Art thou alſo become weak as we, art thou become like unto us?* Thus we ſee the mightieſt men cannot do what they have done, they who have compaſſed the rage and fury of men with bounds, can bound them no more, but they break in upon them like a wide breaking in of the Sea, and beare down all before them. But the power of God knowes no abatings, nor his hand any ſhortnings, as he hath bounded both the natural and myſtical waters, ſo he can and will bound them and none ſhall hinder untill the day and night come to an end. *The Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 29 10.) *ſitteth upon the flood, yea the Lord ſitteth king for ever.* As if he had ſaid, The Lord doth not onely ſit upon (that is, rule and governe) the floods for a while, but he ruleth and governeth them alwayes, *he ſitteth upon them king for ever, even untill day and night come to an end.*

Thirdly; note.

The waters ſhall never totally overflow the earth; As God hath given them a bound, ſo ſuch a bound as ſhall keep them in compaſſe for ever; And as we have an aſſurance in the power of God, that he can keep or compaſſe the waters with bounds to the end of the world; ſo alſo we have his promiſe and his faithfulneſs engaged that he will maintaine thoſe banks and bounds, and keepe them in ſuch repaire that the waters ſhall never prevaile over them (*Gen.* 9. 8, 9, 10, 11.) *And God ſpake unto Noah and to his ſons with him, ſaying, and I, behold, I eſtabliſh my Covenant with you, and with your ſeed after you*, &c. *neither ſhall all fleſh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, neither ſhall there be any more a flood to deſtroy the earth.* And as mankind is under this promiſe of freedome from an univerſal deluge, ſo every godly man may riſe

riſe up to this aſſurance, that no waters of any ſort can wet ſo much as the ſole of his foote, or the hemme of his garment, but as they have leave and commiſſion from him, *who hath compaſſed the waters with bounds, untill the day and night come to an end.*

JOB, CHAP. 26. Verſ. 11, 12.

The pillars of heaven tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at his reproofe.
He divideth the Sea by his power, and by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud.

JOB ſtill proceedeth in the enumeration and illuſtration of the mighty works of God; what he doth in the clouds, and what in the heavens, was ſhewed from the former context; Here Job tels us what the Lord doth *with the heavens*; He who made the heavens and ſtretched out the North over the empty place, can make theſe heavens totter in their place and tremble, when he pleaſeth.

The pillars of heaven tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at his reproof.

There are three things to be enquired into for the opening of this verſe.

Firſt, What is meant by the *pillars of heaven.*

Secondly, How *the pillars of heaven may be ſaid to tremble, and be aſtoniſhed.*

Thirdly, What we are to underſtand by *the reproofe of God*, when he ſaith, *they are aſtoniſhed at his reproofe.*

The pillars of heaven tremble.

There are various opinions about theſe pillars; firſt, many of the Latins hold, that theſe pillars of heaven are the Angels, by, whoſe aſſiſtance (ſay ſome Philoſophers) the motions of the heavenly bodyes with their orbes or ſphears are guided and maintained. And doubtleſſe as the Angels have great employments upon and about

Columnæ cœli, i. e. Angeli contremiſcunt. Aquin: *Angelos vocat columnas cœli, quia ſcilicet eorum officio adminiſtratur motum cœlorum.* Aquin.

about the earth, so also in and about the heavens, and therefore may (not improperly) be called the *pillars of heaven*; in which sence also the Angels are called the powers of heaven, as some interpret (*Math*: 24. 29.) where Christ prophesieth, that *immediatly after the tribulation of those dayes, the Sunne shall be darkned, and the Moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken*: Many of the antients interpret those *powers of heaven* by the Angels; as if the Lord would doe such things in that great day, as should trouble and aston sh not onely men on earth, but the Angels in heaven, who may be called *the pillars of heaven*, as some eminent men for parts and power are called the pillars of the earth; And we may suppose them pillars of heaven, not for the strength and sustainment of heaven, but for the beauty and ornament of it. As we see many pillars in stately Pallaces, which are not placed there to beare up the weight of those buildings, but only to adorne and beautifie them. Or Angels may be called the pillars of heaven, because of the firmnesse and stability of their own nature, not as if they were any firmness or establishment unto heaven.

Stabilitatē permanentē in natura angelorum intelligamus nomine Columnarum. Philip:

Secondly, By these pillars of heaven are conceived to be meant the high mountains of the earth, which seeme to touch the heavens, according to sence, and so to sustaine and beare them up, as pillars; but this opinion not being grounded upon any truth in nature, but only upon a popular error, (though it be a truth that even these supposed pillars of heaven tremble at the reproofe of God) I shall not insist at all upon this interpretation.

Thirdly, These pillars of heaven say others are *the ayre*; for as the lowest parts of the earth are called the foundations of the earth, because the foundation of a building is layd lowest, so the lower parts of heaven the ayr (which is sometimes called heaven, *yea the firmament of heaven*, Gen. 1. 20.) may be called the pillar of heaven. 'Tis true also that the Lord maketh dreadful combustions by stormes and tempests in the ayre, insomuch that those *pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproofe*. But I shall not give this neither as *Jobs* meaning here.

Fourthly, *By the pillars of heaven*, others understand (not the ayr or the mountains) but the whole body or globe of the earth. Thus *David* speaks (2 *Sam*. 22 8.) *Then the earth shook, and trembled, the foundations of heaven moved and shooke, because he was wroth*;

Terra tota velut orbis totius fundamentum ac firmamentum. Merc:

wroth; where the foundations of heaven in the latter part of the verse, may be expounded by the earth in the former part of the verse. For if we consider the whole fabricke of the world together then the earth seems to be the foundation or pilar of heaven. And frequent experiences in all ages, especially in some parts of the world, have felt and reported the trembling of the earth. We commonly call it an *Earthquake*; and Philosophers teach us that the reason of it in nature is the strength of vapors included in and striving to make their way out of the bowels of the earth. And as this trembling of the earth hath a reason in nature, so it is often caused by speciall command from God, as a reproofe of the sinfulnesse of man, or to awaken him from his sin; yet,

Fifthly, I rather conceive, that this phrase *The pillars of heaven*, is used only in a general sense and not particularly intended either of Angels or mountains, of the ayr, or of the earth; but that *the pillars of heaven*, are the strength of heaven: the strength of a building consists in the pillars that beare it up, take away the pillars, and it falls down, *as Sampson said to the lad that held him by the hand, suffer me that I may feele the pillars whereupon the house standeth*, and when he had once moved them, the house fell (Judg. 16. 26. 30.) so that when *Job* saith, *the pillars of heaven tremble*, the meaning is, the greatest strength of or whatsoever is strongest in heaven, the heavens themselves with all their strength, tremble at the reproofs of God. So that this is onely a figurative and Rhetorical expression, not that the heaven hath any material pillars by which it is supported, but because in those mighty concussions which God causeth in the world, it is as if the pillars or powers of heaven it self were shaken and did

Metaphorice hæc dicuntur non quod cœlum columnas habeat quibus nitatur, sed quod in vehementiori orbis concussione videatur nobis perindè ac si nutent ejus columnæ. Merc.

Tremble and were astonished at the reproof of God.

But how may these pillars (whatsoever they are) be said to tremble and be astonished? I answer, 'tis thus expressed in allusion to men who being severely reproved, menaced, and threatned, tremble, and are astonished. Here are two termes used; first, they *tremble*, which word signifieth (as it were) the pounding and shattering of the heavens to peices, or as if they were even ground to powder or crumbled to dust. Secondly, *They are astonished*; The original word imports not a light, sudden, transient astonishment, but an astonishment that stayeth, abideth, & taketh up the mind,

רגפ *contritus concussus fuit.* יתמהו *stupēt denotat moram animi rei singularis consideratione ad eam cognoscendam & ædimendam.* Coc.

minde, or which draweth the minde to a deep consideration of the matter presented, and thereupon to wonder and admiration. (*Isa.* 29 9) *Stay your selves and wonder*, that is, sit down and consider this thing and wonder, barely to wonder is not enough, you must sit down, stay, and rest your selves to wonder, you must take your fill of wonder at this thing. But how can the heavens be astonished, which are not only without understanding but without life? I grant, that to be astonished is proper onely to rationall creatures, yet it is attributed to beasts metaphorically, yea and to things inanimate or without life and sense, as here, and *Jer.* 2. 12. to the heavens, for as rejoycing is attributed to the heavens, and to the earth, to the mountains, and to the valleys, all these are said to rejoyce, to sing; so also astonishment, fear and trembling are attributed to heaven and earth. And as livelesse creatures are said to rejoyce, sing, and praise God when men do it, so likewise they are said to tremble, when men tremble; when God doth such things as affect men with astonishment, then also heaven and earth are spoken of as affected with astonishment.

גער *increpavit, objurgavit, reprehendit duritèr & cum potestate.*

Thirdly, What is meant by the *reproof of God*, which causeth the pillars of heaven to *shake and be astonished*. The word signifies, a sore chiding, the severest reprehension, and that not a bare reproofe, but a reproofe with authority and command, as a father or master reproveth his son or servant. Thus, when *Joseph* told his dream, *That the Sun, Moon, and eleven Stars made obeysance to him, Jacob his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dreame that thou hast dreamed? shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow downe our selves to thee to the earth?* And when *Joshuah the high Priest stood before the Angel of the Lord & Satan at his right hand to resist him* (Zep. 3 2.) *The Lord said to Satan, the Lord rebuke thee ô Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Hierusalem, rebuke thee.* This rebuke had a threatning in it, and was spoken as with an angry countenance, in which there might be read displeasure, and indignation. The vulgar translates, not *rebuke*, but *nod*; The pillars of heaven tremble at thy *nod*; There is a reproofe in a nod, as it was said anciently, *He made Olympus tremble with a nod of his head.* A nod of the head may signifie a reproofe as well as a word of the mouth. There is a twofold reproofe: first, verball or by words; secondly, real or by action and gesture. A verball reproof may be real, but every reall

Pavent ad nutum ejus. Vulg. *Sic illud poetæ natu treme facit Olympum.*

reall reproof is not verbal. Both God and man can act reproofes as well as speake them. And the word here used is applyed in Scripture not onely to verball, and voice reproofes, but to reproofes given by gestures and by actions; for as the holy lives of Godly men who walke exactly are a reproofe to the world though they speak not a word of reproofe, so the actings of God are reproofes, though he doth not speake. Thus *David* saith, (*Psal.* 6. 5.) *Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked*; How did God rebuke the heathen? even by destroying the wicked; that act of thine hath been a reproof to the heathen, and shewed them their folly. In the same sence 'tis said againe (*Psal*, 68. 30.) *Rebuke the company of speare men, the multitude of bulls with the calves of the people, til every one submit himselfe with peices of silver.* The rebuke there prayed for upon that boisterous and bloody generation, was not a *word* but a *worke* of rebuke, that God would do somewhat that might be a rebuke upon them, and a stop to them; as if he had said, *Seeing this company of spear men, and multitude of the buls will not hear any of thy words, seeing they are not capable either of reproof, or counsel, therefore rebuke them by some extraordinary hand, and visible tokens of thy displeasure* (as it follows) *scatter the people that delight in war.* Thus some understand it here that God giveth a reproofe to the heavens, not by a word spoken, but by his providentiall actings and wonderfull workings in the world.

Further, this reproof is expounded by that which is indeed the the voyce of God (and so called in the 29. *Psalme*) *the Thunder*; which though it hath a naturall cause (for which reason Atheists laugh at the simplicity of those who are led up to the thoughts of God, and to a reverential aw of his power at the hearing of it) yet that doth not at all hinder but that God doth in a speciall manner dispose of it (as he doth of all other naturall things) when he pleaseth to serve his providence in the demonstrations of his wrath among the children of men. To which end we may say that God doth often send forth his voice from the clouds, & chides from heaven in thunder. *The voice* (this reproving voice) *of the Lord is upon the waters* (that is, upon the waters which are above the firmament) *the God of glory thundereth, the Lord is upon many waters, the voice of the Lord is powerfull, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty, the voice of the Lord breaketh the Cedars,* he

he breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon, the voyce of the Lord divideth the flames of fire, the voyce of the Lord shaketh the Wilderness, the Lord shaketh the Wilderness of Kades, &c. Thus the pillars of heaven, proper, and the pillars of heaven, in a figure, tremble at or are astonished at these loud reproofes.

Hence observe.

The greatest strength of the creature trembleth at the angry dispensations and appearances of God.

As the lifting up of the light of Gods countenance, puts joy into the heart more then corn & wine, the best things of this world, so the darkness of Gods countenance puts more trouble and sorrow into our hearts, then gall and wormwood, the worst of the world can doe. *David* describes at large in what a kind of hudle and hurry the world was in such a day (*Ps.* 18 13, 14, 15.) *Then the earth shooke and trembled, the foundations also of the hils moved and were shaken because he was wroth. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the highest gave his voice, hailestones and coales of fire, he sent out his arrows and scattered them, and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them, then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.* What *David* there spake of thunder, and lightning, and haile-stones, hath been visibly effected for the destruction of the enemies of the people of God, and for the deliverance of his children. The history of *Joshuah* gives us a famous instance at the 10. Chapter, and though it be not recorded that *David* obtained victoryes by such immediate helps from heaven, yet it is not improbable (considering the tenour of this Psalme) that he did. And we have a notable instance of a victory obtained by Thunder and lightning in the History of the Church, whence that Christian Legion of Souldiers who had earnestly prayed that God would appear for their help, was called *The Thundering Legion*. But whether we expound this context in the Psalm literally & strictly, as expressing what God did for *David* in this kinde; Or figuratively, as expressing only thus much, that God did wonderfull things in one kind or other, in helping *David* against his enemies, or whether we understand it mystically, of what God doth to and for the soules and spiritual estates of men, yet it holds forth in al the utter inability of

of man to beare up when the Lord shewes himselfe in any terrible demonstrations of his presence. Againe (*Psal.* 104 32.) *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth, he toucheth the hills, and they smoake.* There is a twofold looke of God, First, there is the looke of Gods favour, and thus Saints often pray that God will looke down from heaven upon them; this looke is the relieving yea the reviving of the soule; secondly, there is a look of displeasure, an angry, a frowning look, when clouds and storms are seen in the brow: Thus in the Psalme God is said to *look on the earth* frowningly, chidingly, and then it trembled, *he toucheth the hills, and they smoake*, that is, they are as all on fire, The natural hils smoake at Gods touch, and so doe the metaphoricall hills; when God toucheth the great men of the earth they smoak, presently they fret and fume, till they break out into a flame of rage, heating and vexing both themselves and all that are neer them. (*Isa.* 50. 2.) *Behold, at my rebuke, I dry up* (or I can dry up) *the Sea*, I am as able to do it now with a word of my mouth, as I once did for the deliverance of your forefathers, (*Exod.* 14. 21. 29.) *I make* (or I can make when I will with my rebuke) *the rivers a wilderness* (that is, as dry as a desart or wildernes useth to be) *their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dyeth for thirst.* What strange worke doth the rebuke of God make? By that he drieth the Sea, by that he maketh the river a wildernes & and as he doth this by the power of his reproofs upon the sea and rivers natural, so upon the sea and rivers mistical He can dry up those worldly helpes which seeme as inexhaustible as the sea, and as lasting & constant to us as a river which is fed with a continuall spring. And when any power riseth up against us as deep and dangerous as the sea, as wel supplyed and seconded as a river, yet we need not fear for God can presently dry it up, and make us a passage over it, or through it. Yea they who are as wel bottom'd and foundation'd as the earth, shall quickly feel the effects of his power (*Psal.* 114. 7.) *Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord: at the presence of the God of Jacob.* But some may say, if the earth trembleth at the presence of God, then the earth must alwayes tremble, for God is alwayes present; or what is the prepresence of God there spoken of? I answer, as there is a presence of God, that maketh all those that enjoy it to sing for joy; *In thy presence is fulnesse of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures*

sures for evermore (Psal. 16. 11.) so there is a presence of God that is very terrible to the creature; yea that presence of God which is comfortable to his people, is terrible to his enemies; for when the Psalmist had said (*ver.* 2.) *Judah was his Sanctuary, and Israel his dominion*; that is, a people sanctified to him, and governed and protected by him; presently it followeth; *The sea saw it and fled, Jordan was driven backe; The mountaines skipped like rams, and the little hils like lambs.* The Psalmist perceiving all things in such a trembling fit and confusion, seemes to wonder what the matter was, and therefore puts the question *What ayled thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest, yea mountaines that ye skipped, &c?* And presently maketh answer, *Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord*; As if he had said, the cause of all this terror & trouble among the creatures, was nothing else but the presence of God. And if the very sence-lesse creatures were sencible of his wrathfull presence, how much more must man both be sencible of it, and stoop unto it. This the Lord insinuates by a cutting question (*Ezek.* 22. 14.) *Can thy heart indure, or can thy hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee, I the Lord have spoken it, and will doe it.* The Lord by his Prophet speaks there to a people that had a double strength; they were *strong hearted*, and they were *strong handed*, they had much force or outward power, and they had much courage or inward power; but neither hand-strength, nor heart-strength, neither force nor courage shall availe you *in that day* (saith the Lord) *that I shall deale with you* after the dealings of an enemy in wrath and Judgement. God strengthens the hands of his servants & encourageth their hearts to endure his severest dealings with them. But when he cometh to deale severely with those who are rebellious and wicked, their hearts who are stoutest among them shall not be able to endure, nor can they strengthen their hands, *They who have strengthned their hearts and hands most to commit sinne, shall be least able to strengthen them for the bearing of the punishment of sin.*

And hence by way of Corolary or inference consider.

First, If the pillars of heaven tremble before God, if pillars (whose nature is to stand still) move at the presence of God, what shall become of weak man, of man who is a worme? if the pillars of heaven tremble at the reproofe of God, then certainly the pillars of the earth cannot stand fast at his reproof. The pillars of

of heaven are the strongest pillars. When *Jehu* sent Letters to *Samaria* unto the rulers of *Jezreel*, adviling them to set up one of the sons of *Ahab* King & fight for him, the text saith (2 *Kin.* 10. 4.) *they were exceedingly affraid, and said, Behold two Kings stood not before him, how then can we stand?* And thus may the strongest pillars on earth cry out with fear at the displeasure and reproofs of God, Behold the pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproofs, how then can we be established? Some men are or are esteemed to be like *James*, *Cephas*, and *John*, pillars in the Church (*Gal.* 2. 9.) and others are pillars in States and Commonwealths; So we may expound that of *Hannah* in her song (1 *Sam.* 2: 8.) *The pillars of the earth* (that is, earthly powers or Magistrates) *are the Lords, and he hath set the world upon them*, for, indeed, the world would soon fall into confusion, and shatter to peices (as to its civil capacity) if the Lord had not founded it upon pillars of Government and Magistracy, or set up Magistrates & Governours as the pillars of it. And yet how often have these pillars of the earth trembled? how many of them have fallen and been broken at the rebukes of God? There is a sort of pillars that shall never be moved; How great an honour is it to be made such a pillar, and Christ hath taught us who shall be made such a one (*Rev:* 3. 12.) *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God*; Such pillars shall not tremble, they shall not be astonished, when all the pillars of the world are cast down with trembling and astonishment. *David* hath a strange expression (*Psal.* 75. 3.) *The earth and all the inhabitants of it are dissolved*, (if so, whence was it that they were not utterly ruin'd and destroyed, He answers) *I beare up the pillars of it.* But how could *David* beare up the pillars of the earth, when all was dissolved? he means it not of a naturall but civil dissolution; things were out of order, the bands & ligaments of government were sorely broken, men were divided into parties and factions. Thus the earth, and inhabitants thereof were dissolved, which is the saddest condition a people can be in; when it was thus, when there was such a rupture among the people, Then *David* the chiefe Governour (under God) laboured to heal the breaches, and to be a pillar to those shaking pillars: He by his great wisdome, Justice, moderation, and faithfulnesse, bore up the bearers of the people, and supported their supporters, whether persons or things; As if he had said,

said, though there be much confusion in the earth, yet the Lord enables me to keep things together, so that they fall not to the ground, and are not utterly ruined *It is a Great honour to be a pillar bearing up the building, but it is a greater honour to be a pillar bearing up the pillars*; All good Magistrates have the former honour, and all supreame Magistrates if good, have the latter; yet both these honours do originaly & primarily belong unto God; who as he maketh the pillars of heaven tremble, so he can firmly settle (and will while they willingly serve his ends and interests) the pillars of the Earth, though but earthly pillars.

Secondly, Take this also by way of Corolary from the text; *If the pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at the reproofe of God*; what shall we say of those men, or of the hardnesse of their hearts?

First, Who, *heare the reproofes of God dayly, yet tremble not*, What? do the pillars of heaven tremble at the reproofe of God, and shall not men! yet, thus more then bruitish are many men; They hear reproofes, severe reproofes against sin, yet they tremble no more then the stones they stand upon, nor are moved any more then the seats they sit upon; let God thunder, and lighten, and chide, and threaten, they are not stirred with it. The pillars of heaven shall rise up in judgement against this dedolent and obdurate generation. The Prophet (*Jer.* 36.24.) reports a sad story of this; a threatning rolle was sent to *Jehoiakim* king of *Judah*, written from the mouth of *Jeremiah* by *Baruck*; the King caused it to be read as he sate at the fire, and then (whereas it might have been expected that he should be cut at the heart with Godly sorrow and contrition for his sin) *he cut it with the Penknife and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth untill all the rol was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth; yet they were not afraid nor rent their garments, neither the king, or any of his servants that heard all these words*; as if it had been said, what a wonderful hardnesse was there upon the hearts of these men, that they could hear such words read, words so full of terrour, words cloathed with such reproofs, words which spake nothing but death, wrath, destruction, ruine, and desolation, yet notwithstanding all this they were not afraid, neither the King nor any of his servants regarded it. *The heart of man is more hard then hardnesse it selfe, till God soften it, or breaketh it*; man moves not, he relents not, let

let God reprove and thunder, let God doe what he will and say what he will, let God make (as it were) a hell upon the earth, and, in the greatest earnest, cast abroad his firebrands, arrows, and death, in the dreadfullest representations of wrath and judgment yet man trembles not, nor is he any more astonished then if all this was spoken in jest.

Secondly, What shall we say of those who as they tremble not when they heare the reproofes of God, so they tremble not when they see his reproofes. When God makes his reproofes visible, & writes them in blood; when he brings forth his reproofes in woful effects (For as all our mercies and comforts are nothing else but the promises made visible; so all the judgements which God brings upon the world, are nothing but his reproofs and threatnings made visible, when (I say) he brings forth his reproofes in wofull effects) how desperately and indeed (though it may seem a contradiction) how presumptuously are they hardned in sin, whose eye never affects their heart, who can see such reproofs of God yet never tremble. It is said in the Law of *Moses* that punishment should be openly executed upon the presumptuous sinner, (*Deut.* 17.13.) that *all the people should hear & fear and do no more presumptuously*; if all upon the hearing, should fear, and fear so as to do so no more how much more should all that see fear, and do so no more?

Thirdly, What shall we say of those who not only hear and see the reproofs of God but feel them also, and yet tremble not: when the rod is upon their backs, a sword in their bowels, judgements round about them, and death climbing up at their windowes, yet they are not astonished; they are not only *word proof*, but *judgement proofe*: they are not sencible of what they feele, they are smitten, yet not sick, sorrow and griefe of heart toucheth them not, though they are smitten for their sins, and peirced with many sorrows. They are so farre from being troubled at the remembrance of former sins while they smart under present afflictions, that with wicked King *Ahaz* they sin yet more against God in the time of their affliction. They are so far from turning as wisdome counselleth us (*Pro.* 1.23.) at the verbal reproofes of God, or at the reproofs of his mouth, that they will not returne while he reproves them with his hand. Surely, at last the trembling pillars of heaven shall reprove them, who tremble not, nor are astonished at the reproofs of God. Vers. 12.

Vers. 12. *He divideth the sea by his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud.*

The generall scope and sense of this verse, is an illustration of the power and wisdome of God by a twofold effect; first, by dividing and vexing the mighty waters of the sea with boysterous winds and storms; secondly, by stopping and appeasing them when they are in their highest rage and proudest fury, as if they were smitten to death.

First, *He divideth the sea by his power.*

רגע *movit commovit volvit, per Antiphrasin quievit.*

The word which we render *to divide*, hath a twofold signification, in a contrariety, as is frequent in the Hebrew; First, to move and roul, to stir up, and trouble, as the waters and waves of the Sea are by the winds, which doe so move and stir them as that they seeme to divide and cut them asunder, and cause them to dash one against another, & so it is applicable to the Sea in a storm. 2ly, it signifies to quiet & appease, and so it is applicable to the Sea in a calme. The seventy render it, so here, *He hath appeased the Sea by his power*: & a learned Hebrician gives the same sence, *By his power the Sea is quiet.* And 'tis indeed an act of the same power to quiet the Sea, to husht the winds, and command a calme, as to raise storms upon the Sea, or to put the Sea into a storm; but I shall not prosecute that sense in this first part of the verse, because the latter part of it speakes rather of that point, as will appeare in the opening of it; And so the whole verse giveth us a compleate description of the mighty power of God upon the mighty waters; first, in causing their rage and fury; secondly, in causing them to be still, and quiet. The exercise of which two powers carry a compleat Empire and Dominion over the Seas.

Virtute sedavit mare. Sept: *Virtute ejus quievit mare.* Vatabl:

He divideth the Sea.

There is a general interpretation of the verse which I shall touch before I pitch upon that which I conceive most proper. *This division of the Sea, & smiting through the proud*, is supposed to be a description of Gods dealing with *Pharoah* and his *Ægyptians*, when he brought the people of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, at which time (the History telleth us that) *he divideth the sea by his power, and by his understanding he smote through the proud*, or through *Rahab*. The division of the sea is unquestionable (*Exod.* 14. 21.) *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to goe backe by a strong East winde all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.* The latter part of the verse is as clear in the plain signification of it, to the same work of providence, for then *By his understanding did God smite through the proud.* And the word *Rahab*, which we translate *proud*, is often used in Scripture to signifie *Ægypt*. Thus (*Psal.*87.4.) *I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me*, that is, of *Ægypt* and *Babylon*; as if he had said, those places which have been the greatest enemies to the people of God shall desire to joyne with the people of God, *Sion* shall have converts from *Ægypt* and *Babylon*. And the reason why *Ægypt* is expressed in Scripture under this word, ariseth from both significations of it; first, *strength*, for *Ægypt* was a very strong Nation, and therefore the *Israelites* were reproved for going to them for helpe, and relying upon their strength, which though great in it selfe, yet should be to them but a broken reed; secondly, as it signifieth *pride*, or the *proud*; men are usually proud of strength, & *Ægypt* being a strong nation, was also a very proud nation; yet this *Ægypt*, this *Rahab*, strong and proud, shall fall downe and humble her selfe before the Lord. And though now *Ægyptians* be strangers from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, yet of them it shall be said that they were borne (by a second or new spiritual birth in *Sion*. We have the like sence of the word and almost the same phrase of speech with this in *Job* (*Psal.*89.9,10) *Thou rulest the raging of the sea, when the waves thereof arise thou stillest them*; then followeth in the next words, *Thou hast broken Rahab as one that is slain* (that is, *Egypt*) *thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.* And again (*Isai.* 51.9) *Awake, awake O arme of the Lord, put on strength*; The Psalmist saith, *Thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arme*, the Prophet prayeth *Awake, awake O arme of the Lord, As in the ancient dayes, in the generations of old, art thou not it, that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon, art not thou it which hath dryed the sea?* &c. Which plainly hints the destruction of *Pharoah* and his host in the red sea. *Job* also seems to ayme at that noble, and notable act of divine power, and understanding: And the words of the text (as all must grant)

grant) without any ſtraine or trouble are applicable to it: The onely difficulty lyeth in this, becauſe it is not agreed upon by any Chronologers, who have ſearched ſtrictly, and critically into thoſe times; that *Job* lived after the departure of the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, yea ſome affirme, that *Job* dyed that very yeare when the *Iſraelites* departed out of *Egypt*, and if ſo, then he could not make inſtance ſo many years before he dyed (unleſs propheticall) concerning that miraculous diviſion of the red Sea, and the deſtruction of the *Egyptians*. Beſides this, another argument is alledged to invalidate this interpretation, becauſe all along *Job* inſtanceth in the general works of God, what he doth in the heavens, in the earth, in the ayre, and here in the Sea, ſo that it doth not ſeeme probable that *Job* ſhould deſcend to the mention of that particular providence of God to the *Iſraelites*; though that may ſerve for a glorious proofe and illuſtration of the poynt upon which *Job* hath ſo long inſiſted. The workes of God in ordering the works of nature, beare the reſemblance of his works among the children of men; his repreſſing the raging of the Sea, looketh like his repreſſing the rage of the wicked who are like the troubled Sea.

Hæc accipere de decem plagis Ægyptiorum per quas eduxit Iſrael de Ægypto. Dionyſius. Non placet hæc referre ad diviſionem maris rubri in Egypto Iſraelitarum gratia, quia ante illud Exitus eveniſſe dicimus fuiſſe Job & generaliter totus loquitur de dei operibus. Mercer.

He divideth the Sea by his power.

We may take that act two wayes; either, firſt, as dividing is uſed in an ordinary ſenſe, to cut out and part one thing or one peece of a thing from another. It is a great and powerfull work of God, to divide the Sea, or the whole bulk of waters to ſeveral parts of the world, and for the accommodation of ſeverall Countries. At firſt the waters covered the whole earth, *all was a great deepe, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*, (Gen. 1. 2.) Nothing was to be ſeene, or there was no face of any thing but water. And therefore as it is ſaid (*Gen.* 1 7.) that *the Lord ſeparated or divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament.* So (*Gen.* 1. 9.) *God ſaid let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appeare, and it was ſo, and God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of waters he called Sea.* And as that Scripture in *Geneſis* ſheweth that the Sea is the Gathering together of waters; ſo other Scriptures ſhew that the waters of the Sea are divided or run out in ſeveral Diviſions. The 104. Pſalme is a continued meditation of the mighty power

power of God put forth both in creation and providence, where the Pſalmiſt having ſaid of God (*v.* 5.) *Who laid the foundations of the earth that it ſhould not be removed for ever*; he addeth (*v* 6. 7, 8) *Thou coveriſt it* (that is, the whole earth) *with the deepe as with a garment; the waters ſtood above the mountaines* (that is, the waters were higher then the higheſt mountaines.) But what did God then? *at thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of thy thunder they haſted away* (that is, when thou didſt ſpeake powerfully and ſtrongly to them, as with the voice of thunder) *they go up by the mountaines, they goe downe by the valleyes, unto the place which thou haſt founded for them; thou haſt ſet them bounds that they may not paſſe over, that they returne not again to cover the earth.* As the waters are now put into one great veſſel, ſo they are carryed out in ſeveral great channels all the world over for the conveniency of trafficke; and for the more eaſie entercourſe of nation with nation. Mr *Broughton* expounds his tranſlation fully to this purpoſe; *Of a General water, he made many*; and he tranſlates the latter part of the verſe fully to that ſence: *And by his wiſdome he parted the maine water*, or *pride*, that is, the proud Sea; that threatneth to drowne the land. So that though the Sea be but one body of waters, yet it is divided into many members, and receives different names, according to the differing names, whether of Iſlands or Continents, whoſe ſhoares it waſheth.

Secondly, Others expound this diviſion of the Sea, of the violent motion of the Sea. So, *He divideth the Sea*, is, he maketh the Sea rage, and waters riſe up againſt waters, or perſons as nations doe when they are divided among themſelves Sometimes the Sea is (as if it were) all of one peice, in union, and concord, all is calme and quiet; by and by, the Lord divides the Sea, ſets wave againſt wave, flood againſt flood, water againſt water, as if the Sea were broken into a thouſand factions. It is ſaid in that myſticall Scripture (*Dan.* 7. 2.) *That the Prophet ſaw in his viſion by night, and Behold the foure winds of heaven ſtrive upon the great Sea*; That is, there were great troubles and commotions raiſed in all parts of the world, which vexed, divided, and turmoyled the nations, even as the Sea is when boyſterous winds, eſpecially when all the winds are let out of priſon to ſtrive & contend with one another. Men make many fights at Sea, and God many times makes the Seas fight. Which fightings and dividings of the Sea, are a

cleare embleme of all the diviſions and fights, which ariſe among men, and are acted either at Land or Sea.

Hence note,

The diviſions, ſtormes, and ragings of the ſea are by the power of God.

The Pſalmiſt is much upon this, (*Pſal.* 107.23,24,25) *They that goe downe to the ſea in ſhips, that doe buſineſs in great waters, thoſe ſee the workes of the Lord in the deepe, for he commandeth and raiſeth up the ſtormy winde, which lifted up the waves thereof,* (where note, they are lifted up by Gods command) *they mount up to the heaven, they goe downe againe to the depths, their ſoul is melted becauſe of trouble.* (Jon: 1 4) *The Lord ſent out a great wind into the ſea, and there was a mighty tempeſt in the ſea.* (Jere: 10. 13) God is ſaid *to bring the winde out of his treaſure* (and *Prov:* 30. 4) *To gather the wind in his fiſt.* The wind is ſent out, and the wind is gathered in, 'tis treaſured up, and 'tis diſburſed out by his own appointment to ſerve his providences and deſignes towards men, both in mercy and in Judgement.

We may hence inferre, that

As the Lord divideth the ſea, ſo the earth.

When men are all of a mind, all as one man, he can ſever and divide their ſpirits, and then cauſe them to daſh againſt one another like the waves of a tempeſtuous ſea. The old world was of one minde, but the Lord came down, and divided them, when he ſaw them united in that worke (*Gen:* 11 6.) *The people are one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to doe, and now nothing will be reſtrained from them which they have imagined to doe, ſo the Lord confounded their language, and ſcattered them abroad*; They were building a *Babel* to ſecure themſelves againſt a ſecond deluge, & to get *them a name leſt they ſhould be ſcattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.* Therefore God brought their feares upon them, and ſcattered them *We lay our ſelves moſt open to that judgement, which we labour moſt to prevent in a ſinfull way.* As there are diviſions among men which are their ſin, ſo God ſends diviſions among men which are their puniſhment. And as God ſends diviſions among men for the puniſhment of ſome, ſo for the probation or tryal of others. Chriſt ſaith (*Math:* 10.35.) *I am*

I am come to ſet a man at variance againſt his father, & the daughter with her mother, and the daughter in law againſt her mother in law; and a mans enemies ſhall be they of his owne houſe. Such diviſions the Lord makes on the earth, that it may appeare how ſtrongly and immoveably his faithfull ones are united unto him. As we are to aſcribe our union, ſo our diviſions to God; it is he that ordereth all theſe things, though they flow from the corruption, pride, and ſelfiſhneſs of men. When there are diviſions and emulations among us, we ſhew our ſelves (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor:* 3 3) and walk as men; But God ſheweth himſelfe righteous, and acteth as God; *He divideth the ſea by his power,*

And by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud.

The dividing of the ſea was aſcribed to the power of God in the former part of the verſe, and here his ſmiting through the proud is aſcribed to his underſtanding. The word ſignifies to ſtrike ſo, as to deſtroy, or kill, to ſtrike dead (*Iſa:* 30. 26. *Numb:* 24. 8.) *God ſtriketh home when he ſtriketh the proud.*

מחץ *eſt illa deprimere, ut quum paxillus vel cuneus corpori ſolidi imp. imitur.*

But who or what are the proud ones, whom God ſmiteth through? The word is *Rakab*, (as was toucht before in the generall interpretation of the verſe) ſignifies two things; firſt, ſtrength, ſo ſome render it here, *By his underſtanding he ſmiteth through ſtrength*; that is, *thoſe things which are ſtrongeſt.* The very weakneſſe of God is ſtronger then man, and therefore there is nothing ſo ſtrong, but God can quickly ſmite it through or deſtroy it. Secondly, it ſignifyeth pride, becauſe men uſually are proud of their ſtrength; whence that caution (Jer. 9. 23.) *Let not the mighty man glory in his might.* Any kind of ſtrength is apt to make man proud, the ſtrength of his eſtate, and purſe, is a great temptation to pride; ſtrength of body, ſtrength of parts, ſtrength of wit and underſtanding (which is the higheſt, and nobleſt naturall ſtrength) puts on to pride, yea (ſo ſtrange are the wayes and methods of temptation) the very ſtrength of grace or ſpirituall ſtrength hath blowne up ſome with pride; For though humility flow properly from the ſtrength of grace, and the more grace the more humility, yet upon a preſumption of the greatneſſe and ſtrength of their graces, ſome have been proud and high minded, that is, they have not lived in ſuch dependance upon Chriſt as they ought Our ſtrength lyes much in the ſence of our weaknes, becauſe

because, then we go out of our selves to Christ for strength, that is the meaning of the Apostles confession, *When I am weake, then am I strong* (2 Cor. 12. 10) And they who are strong in themselves, must needs be weake, because the strength of God goeth out against them. And therefore it will not be unprofitable for us, before I come to the special explication of the proud here intended, to meditate upon and make use of this Scripture in the full latitude and compasse of the word. For whosoever he is that is proud, whether he be proud of his natural or civil or supernatural strength, let him look to himselfe, God understandeth him, and by his understanding he will *smite through the proud.* The proud man is alwayes in danger of falling, though (because of his pride) he least of all men, either feareth or suspecteth a fall. How can they be safe against whom God hath declared himself an enemy. There's no armour of proofe against the stroakes of God, if God smiten an enemy, he smiteth through, and so he alwayes smiteth the proud *Saul* attempted more then once to smite *David* to the wall with his Javelin; yet *David* avoided his blow and got out of his furious presence; But when God casteth his Javelin at the proud, they shall not escape a smiting through and nayling to the wall. *By his understanding he smiteth through the proud.*

But more distinctly, who is the proud in the text whom God smiteth through?

First, Some say the *Devil*; He indeed is the *proud one* his pride was his fall from God, and God hath smitten him through for his pride.

Et scientia stratus est cetus. 70 i.e. *suo imperio subegit.*

Secondly, Others understand by the proud, *the whale in the sea*; thus the *seventy* translate, *and by his knowledge he hath destroyed the Whale or Leviathan*, of whom the Lord saith (in the 41. Chapter of this booke, *v.* 34.) *He is a King over all the children of pride.*

Intelligentia sua percussit Gigantus. Targ:

Thirdly, The Chaldee paraphrase saith, *He hath smitten through the Giants.* Which whether it be meant of the Whales who are Giants among the fishes of the sea; or of Giants who are like Whales at land, bigger and more formidable then the rest of men, the sence is the same; both agreeing in this, that God can quickly destroy and subdue those who are greatest, strongest, and so proudest in this world. But leaving all these suppositions, I shall conclude.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That *by the proud*, we are rather to understand the strong and mighty waves and waters of the Sea in their greatest height and pride. This holdeth fayrest correspondence with the former part of the verse, *He divideth the Sea by his power*, that is, He raiseth stormes, and so divides the waters, and when the Sea is in its greatest rage, then *by his understanding he smiteth through the proud*, the proud waves, and so maketh a calme. The sea in it self, especially in its swellings and stormings is a proud creature; and that title or epethite of pride is often given to it: we reade (*Psal:* 124. 5.) of *proud waters*, and (*Job* 38. 11.) of *the proud waves*, at the 13. verse of the Epistle of *Jude*, we read, of *raging waves of the sea*, and (*Luke* 21. 25.) of *roaring waves of the sea.* The Prophet (*Jer:* 12. 5.) speaketh of *the swelling of Jordan*; so that when *Job* saith, *by his understanding he smiteth through the proud*, we may clearly interpret him of the sea-waves, then which nothing in appearance is more proud and swelling; and therefore when God allayeth and guideth the high grown waves of the Sea, he may well be said, *to smite through the proud.*

Percutit, i. e. *domat & compescit superbiam maris.* Dtus: *Sua potentia scindit mara & intelligentia sua compescit ejus ferociam* Tygur: *Cum deus tranquillat mare, percutere et concultare videtur superbum.* Pined,

Hence note.

God knoweth how to bring downe the Sea in its greatest rage and pride.

God doth it by his understanding, as well as by his power; As God hath power enough to divide the Sea, and make it stormy, so he hath understanding enough to calme and quiet it. We read (*Math:* 8. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27) *That Christ being entred into a ship with his disciples, a great tempest arose, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves, but he was asleepe. And his disciples came to him and awoke him, saying, Lord save us we perish. And he saith unto them, why are ye fearefull, O ye of little faith? then he arose and rebuked the winds and the Sea, and there was a great calme.* This is a plaine exemplification and exposition of *Jobs* assertion, *by his understanding he smiteth through the proud*; When the Sea was as furious as a mad man, who hath lost his reason, and will hear none, yet then Christ by his divine power and wisedome made it as obedient as they who have and act most reason are, when they heare the most rational and pressing perswasions, or (we may say) that he husht the Sea as a mother doth her crying childe, and rock't it into a sleepe; yea he doth not only calm the

the sea, but kill it, or strike it dead (as the word of the text imports.) There is a particular sea which is called *The dead sea*, But God can make all the seas *dead seas*, and then he delights most to drive it, when they threaten to swallow up all living.

This may be a great support to us among the stormes which we meet with here at land. When men and nations are divided and raging against one another, God can quiet them It is an easie matter to make divisions among men, but it calls for much holy skill and wisdome, even the wisdome of God, to heale and solder them. And when the spirits of men are proudest and lifted up like the high waves of the sea; then usually 'tis Gods time to appeare and strike them through; At his word (as the Prophet speakes, (*Isa*: 11. 13) *The envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vexe Ephraim.* Whence is it that *Ephraim* envyeth *Judah?* whence it is that *Judah* vexeth *Ephraim?* is it not from their pride? saith not *Solomon* (Pro: 13. 10.) *By pride cometh contention.* How then shall the contention between *Ephraim* and *Judah* cease, but by *striking through their pride?* When there is lesse pride among men, there will be more peace, and God will smite the proudest rather then his people shall not have peace. As the Jews were divided among themselves, so likewise were the Jewes and Gentiles, *Till Christ reconciling both to God in one body by the Crosse, did slay enmity thereby* (Eph: 2. 16) And how did he slay their enmity, even by smiting through their pride, and humbling their spirits under his owne crosse or sufferings, by which, and the throne of Grace, they were at once reconciled to God, and one to another.

Secondly, *That God* who can appease the rage of the proud seas, can also appease or destroy the rage of the proudest men who oppose his people. So some understand that, (*Zech.* 10. 11.) where we have a prophesie of bringing the children of *Israel* out of *Egypt* and *Assyria* into their owne land; *And he shall passe through the sea with affliction, and he shall smite through the waves in the sea; and all the deeps of the river shall dry up*; that is, Christ the deliverer of his people, shall passe through the nations who are like the red sea, standing in the way of his peoples return, & he will afflict them, or bring much affliction upon them, and he will smite those who like proud waves shal threaten to swallow them up.

up, so that *the deepes of the river*, even those hindrances, which it was thought could never be removed, shall dry up at his command or rebuke, *and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart away*, that is, they who shall then be to the people of God, as *Egypt* and *Assyria* were of old, hard Task-masters and leaders of them into Captivity, shall be subdued and removed, when they are proudest and in their greatest power. 'Tis matter of strong consolation to all the faithfull, that they serve a God who is able to reconcile the divided spirits of his own people one to another, and cause all their envy to depart from them; who is able also to reconcile their greatest adversaries to them, and eyther to slay their enmity, or to slay them as enemies.

Thirdly, 'Tis matter of comfort to the people of God. For he who can appease the rage of the Sea, can also appease the rage of Satan, and smite through the proud waves of his Temptations. Satan goeth about continually to raise stormes, and vexe poore soules O the rage of temptation that many poore soules are under, how do the billowes of it rise like a violent sea, wave after wave, gust after gust. As God himselfe raiseth stormes of temptation against a poor soul (thus *David* spake in his own case, *Psal.* 42. 7. *Deepe calleth unto deepe at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billowes are gone over me*) which yet in due time he will appease, so when Satan by his leave or command, direction or permission raiseth stormes of temptation, which he hath no mind to allay but rather to encrease and double dayly more and more, yet O wearied and weather beaten soul, be of good cheere, the Lord can smite through the proud enemy Satan, with all his floods, and waves of temptation, and make a calme

Lastly, Let them also remember this and be comforted who find proud waves, proud lusts, and corruptions, stirring and raging like a Sea within them. For that which is said by the Prophet of the wicked, is true in part of the righteous, and sometimes it is in a very great measure fulfilled in them (*The wicked are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest*, (Isa: 57. 20.) that is, they are like the Sea in a storme which is so, not only because of the unquietnesse of their spirits about the providences and dealings of God with them, but because their violent lusts hurry them this way and that way as the sea is toyled and tossed by the windes,

this (I say) is true also in part of Saints) some more, some lesse are like a troubled Sea, yea they have a Sea of sinfull lusts within them, which the Lord is pleased sometimes to divide and stirre up; their corruptions storme and bluster, and Satan labours to make them bluster more and more. We daily hear the complaints and cryes of soules, thus tossed, coming to Christ, as his Disciples once did, and crying to him, *Master save us we perish*; we feare we shall be overwhelmed and drowned in this blacke Sea of our corruptions. To such Christ saith, *O ye of little faith*, wherefore do ye thus fear, cannot I smite through the proud, the proud waves of your hearts. Is *unbelief* the proud wave, that ye feare will swallow you up? Christ can give you such an encrease of faith as shall swallow up your unbelief; is *pride* it selfe the proud wave that is like to overwhelme you? Christ who smiteth through the proud in Judgement, will also smite through thy pride in mercy. It is a great act of Grace in man to desire God to strike through his pride, & it is a great act of mercy to man when God doth so. The more God smiteth our sins, the more he declares his love to and his care of our soules. The remainders of pride in the Saints shall be smitten through; but sinners who remaine in their pride shall be smitten through themselves. God whose power and understanding are made known by smiting through the proud waves of the Sea, will at last make his Justice and his holinesse known by smiting through the proud hearts of men, or rather men of proud hearts. Proud men strike at God, yea kick against him, no wonder then if he strike and kicke them. All the sufferings of Christ are wrapt up under that one word, *His humiliation*, implying that he was smitten for all our sins, so most of all for our pride. That man whose pride is not smitten to death or mortified by the death of Christ shall surely be smitten to death, even to eternal death for his pride. As God understandeth throughly who are proud, so *by his understanding he will smite through the proud.*

JOB,

JOB, CHAP. 26. Vers. 13, 14.

By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens: his hand hath formed the crooked Serpent.
Lo, these are parts of his wayes, but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

JOB hath given us a particular of many illustrious workes of God, what he doth in the depths below, and what in the heights above; in this verse he gives another instance, and that a very choyce one, upon the same subject. As if he had said; *After all this large discourse which I have made of the workes of God, I will conclude with that which is the most remarkeable peice of them all. This is he who hath adorn'd the heavens with that unutterable beauty wherewith they shine, and the spheares which wind and turne round about the heavens like Serpents, are smoothed and polished by his hand.*

Et ut in opere ipsius pulcherrimo desinam hic ille est, qui cœlos illa enarrabil pulchritudine exornavit, & sphæra illa lucis gyris undique cælis ser. Ē ium initar pertinaciter ductis sunt opus manibus ipsius tornatum. Bez

Vers. 13. *By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens.*

The Spirit of God is taken two wayes in Scripture. First, for the power of God. Secondly, and so here for God, *the power* as distinct from the Father and the Son, by whom God wrought all things in the creation of the world (*Gen:* 1. 2.) *The Earth was without forme and voyd, and darkenes was upon the face of the deepe, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* It is a rule in Divinity, *That the external works of the Trinity are undivided*; and so the *Three Persons* concurred in the making of the world. God the Father created, and is called *Father* in Scripture, not only in relation to the Eternall ineffable Generation of God the Son, but also in reference to the production of the creature. God the Son, or the Eternal word created, (*Joh:* 1. 1, 2, 3.) *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God; All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made.* God the Spirit or Holy-Ghost, he likewise created, and he only is mentioned by *Moses*

q. d. *visus & voluntate, ut nomen spiritus sanctus in scriptura usurpatur, sed melo ipsum dei spiritum almum accipere, quo omnia deus fecit.* Mercer

מרחפת *non simplicem motionem denotat sed qualem columba perficit cum ovis ad excludendum pullos incubat* Rab: Selom: *Verbum translatum ab avibus pullitiei suæ incubantibus.* Jun:

distinctly, or by name, as the Agent in the original constitution of all things, And the Hebrew word (rendred in our translation *moved, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*) by which the Agency of the Spirit in that Great work is expressed, carryeth in it a very accurate significancy of that formative vertue or power which the Spirit put forth about it. For it is a metaphor taken from birds who sit upon their eggs to hatch and bring forth their young ones; and so importeth the effectuall working of the Spirit, whereby that confused masse or heap was drawn out and formed up into those severall creatures specifyed by *Moses* in the History of the Creation; Among which we find the *garnishing of the heavens*, spoken of here by *Job*, is reported by *Moses* for the worke of the fourth day Further, we may consider the heavens: first, in their matter and being, secondly, in their beauty and ornaments; *Job* speaks of the latter.

By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens.

שפרה *adornavit, decoravit, pulchrè fecit.*

God hath not onely created, but pollished, and (as it were) painted or embroydered the heavens. The originall word implyeth the making of them beautiful, contentfull, and pleasant unto the eye; this is the Lords work. And therefore as the whole world because of the excellent order and beauty of it is exprest in the Greek by a word that signifies *beautiful*, so some parts of the world have a special beauty and lustre put upon them beyond the rest. The heavens are not like a plain garment (as we say) without welt and guard; but they are laced and trimmed, they are enamel'd and spangled, they glister and sparkle in our eys with rayes and beams of light. *By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens.*

κοσμος.

If it be asked, what *is this garnishing of the heavens?* I answer; the setting or placing in of those excellent lights, Sunne, Moon and Starres in the heavens, are the garnishing of them Light is beautifull, and the more light any thing hath, the more beauty it hath. Precious stones have much light in them; those lights the Starres are as so many stones of beauty and glory set or moving in the heavens. Light as diffused and shed abroad in the ayr is exceeding delightfull and beautifull, but light as it is contracted and drawn together into the Sunne, Moone and Starres, is farre more beautiful light in the ayre pleaseth the eye, but light in the Sun conquers and dazzel's the eye by the excessive beauty and bright-

brightnesse of it. In the first day of the Creation God said; *Let there be light, and there was light*; but in the fourth day *he said, let there be lights*, that is, let there be severall vessels, to receive, hold, and containe light, and then to issue it out among the inhabitants of the earth (*Gen.* 1. 14.) *And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night: and let them be for signes, and for seasons, and for dayes, and for years, and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth; and it was so. And God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the starres also, and God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth.* God in Creation did with the light, as he did with the waters, which being made were divided, the waters above the firmament were divided from the waters under the firmament, and *the waters under the heaven he gathered together into one place* (Gen. 1. 9) God prepared a certain great vessel into which the waters were called and gathered that they should not spread over the earth, as they did at first, which gathering together of the waters God *called Seas* (*Gen.* 1. 10) Thus the light which was spread and scattered through the ayre over all the earth. God gathered into several vessells, and the gathering together of light he *called Sun, Moone*, and *Stars*, which are (as *Job* here calleth them) *the garnishing of the heavens.*

Pulchritudo et ornamenta cœlorũ stellæ sunt, sicut terræ animantia et plantæ. Sanct.

Moses epitomiseth or briefly summs up his larger narrative of the Creation in these words (*Gen*: 2 1.) *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them*, that is, they were finished not only as to their essentials, but ornamentals; not only was the foundation laid, the walls and pillars, the beams and rafters of that goodly structure set up and perfected, but all the furniture of it was brought in, and the beauties of it compleated. Now, as gems, minerals, plants, trees, and all living creatures are the garnishing of the Earth and the host of God there, so the Sunne, Moon, and Starrs, are the garnishing of heaven, and the host of God there. *David* speaketh of these distinctly (*Psal.* 33. 6.) *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them, by the breath of his mouth.* All creatures whether placed in heaven or earth, are for their number, their strength, their order, their readinesse at a call or command, the host of God.

Earthly

Earthly Princes ſhew their power in their hoſts and armyes; of what power God is both his acts and his hoſts abundantly declare. And as theſe creatures are the armyes or hoſt of God in heaven and earth, ſo they are the Adornings and Garniſhings of heaven and earth. *Job* in this place ſpeaketh only of the former, *By his Spirit he hath Garniſhed the heavens.*

Onely here take notice, that ſome expound the word *Spirit*, for the *winde* which bloweth in the ayre, and ſo render the text thus; *By his winde he garniſheth the heavens*; As if this were *Jobs* meaning, that God ſending forth the windes diſpelleth and ſcattereth thoſe clouds, foggs, and miſts, which often cover the face of the heavens, and hinder our beholding their glory and garniſhings. According to this interpretation *the garniſhing of the heavens* is nothing elſe but the removing of that which obſcureth the Garniſhing of them. And it is true, that when the heavens are maſkt over with clouds and darkneſſe, God by the winds cleareth the ayre, and ſo reneweth the face of thoſe heavenly bodyes. But I paſſe by this, and ſhall onely inſiſt upon the former expoſition of theſe words, as being more ſutable with *Jobs* ſcope, and more expreſſive of the power and Glory of God, in the great things which he hath wrought for us.

By his Spirit he garniſheth the heavens.

Hence learne:

Firſt, *We ought joyntly to acknowledge and give glory to the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the worke of Creation.*

Solomon in his advice to the young man ſaith (*Eccl.* 12 1.) *Remember thy creators in the dayes of thy youth*; We tranſlate in the ſingular number, *creator*, but the Hebrew is plural, *Creators*; intimating the myſtery of the Holy Trinity, as *Moſes* alſo is conceived to doe in that plural expreſſion (*Gen.* 1 26.) *And God ſaid, let us make man in our image after our likeneſs.* And though this be added in a way of Eminency, when the particular creation of man is ſet downe, yet we are to underſtand it ſo generally of the whole worke of Creation, and as of the worke of Creation, ſo of all other divine works towards the creature Redemption is the worke of the Father and of the Spirit as wel as of the Son, and ſanctification is the worke of the Father and of the Son as wel as of the Spirit. The three perſons worke together, only they have a

אתר בוראיך *Creatorum tuorum Myſterium Sanctæ Trinitatis.* Pſc:

diſtinct manner of working, according to which each worke is chiefly attributed to that perſon: and ſo creation is ſpecially appropriated to the Father Redemption to the Son, and Sanctification to the Holy Ghoſt. Seeing then all Three work together in all things towards us. All three ought to be equally and eternally honoured, worſhipped, loved and obeyed by us. *By his Spirit he hath garniſhed the heavens.*

Secondly, Obſerve.

The heavens are full of beauty, God hath not only made them, but adorn'd them.

What a rich and Royall Canopy hath God hung over the heads of poor worms, duſt & aſhes. God did not think it enough to give us a houſe, unleſſe he gave us alſo a pleaſant houſe, he was not ſatisfied in ſetting up a large fabricke for us, unleſſe he alſo furniſhed and garniſhed it for us. God hath made the world not only uſefull but contentfull to us, he hath fitted it not only for our neceſſity but delight. The earth is beautifull, but the heavens exceed in beauty. The heavens are the Ceiling of our houſe, and the Starres are like Golden ſtuds and ſparkling Diamonds in that Ceiling. We may inferre three things from the Garniſhing of theſe heavens.

Firſt; If the heavens which we ſee are ſo glorious, what are the heavens which no eye hath ſeene. If God hath thus diſcernably adorned the *firſt and ſecond heavens*; how unconceiveable are the ornaments of the *third heavens*? If nature hath ſo much beauty in it, how beautiful a thing is Glory? If God hath prepared ſuch heavens, as our eyes ſee, for thoſe who hate him, then ſurely *eye hath not ſeene, eare hath not heard, nor hath it entred into the heart of man* to underſtand what thoſe heavens are which God hath prepared for them and for them alone, *who love him.* The light of theſe viſible heavens is but darkneſs *to the inheritance of the Saints in light.* The *Moon light* (if I may ſo ſpeak) of that ſtate, ſhall be better and more illuſtrious, then the *Sun-light* of this, and the light of the Sun ſhall be ſeven fold, as the light of ſeven dayes, in that Great day when the Lord ſhall perfectly bind up all the breaches of his people, and heale the ſtroak of their wound. God, who by his Spirit hath garniſhed theſe heavens; will be himſelfe with his Son and Spirit, the eternal Garniſhing of thoſe heavens. Secondly,

Secondly, Seeing God hath been so bountiful and munificent, as to Garnish the heavens for us, even for us, by his Spirit; seeing he hath provided such a house for the comfort of our lives here, who never deserved the meanest cottage, how should we pray that he would garnish our souls by the Spirit; as a heaven for himselfe to dwel in: or as the Apostle speaks (*Eph.* 2. 22.) *That we may be builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit.* God hath two houses, *an upper house, and a lower house*: The heaven of heavens is his upper house, and the heaven of an holy & humble heart is his lower. God is every where but he dwelleth no where but in a heaven; He dwelleth not in the heart of any man, till that be made a heaven, and that a heaven garnished by the Spirit. As the Sunne Moone and Stars are the garnishing of the naturall heaven, so holy knowledge and the graces, faith, hope and love, are the garnishing of those spirituall heavens, the hearts of the sons of men. And until their hearts be thus garnished, they are not an heaven for God, but a hell or habitation for the devil; and he puts furniture and garnishings into them suitable to himselfe, and fitting his own entertainment. We read in the Gospel (*Matth.* 12 43. 44.) That, *when the uncleane spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest & findeth none; Then he saith, I will returne into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty swept and garnished.* Lusts and corruptions, unbeliefe, pride, wrath, envy, these are the garnishings of Satans house. And as he delighteth most to dwell there where he findeth most of these garnishings; so God delighteth most to dwel in that soule which is most Garnished with grace. Then pray, and pray earnestly that God who hath garnished the heavens by his Spirit for our use, would also garnish our hearts by his Spirit, for his own use.

Thirdly, As this should provoke us to pray that our hearts may be garnished as a house of delight, that God may dwel in us; So it should provoke us to garnish our lives, that God may be honoured by us. And as God hath not only made a good world for us, as to the matter, but made it pleasant, & adorned it for us: so we should strive not onely to doe that which is good for the matter, but to put ornaments upon it, and make it pleasant to our utmost in the eys of God. We should garnish our works as God hath garnished his; God hath (as it were) polisht and engraven his

his workes for us by exquisite art and skill, so that the workmanship is better then the matter; and shall we satisfie our selves, if we do that which is good for the matter, though we bestow no cost, no holy skill and workmanship upon it? shall we serve God onely *with plaine work*, when we see how curious and elaborate his works are? I grant, *plain work* is best, and most pleasing to God, as *plainness* is opposed to hypocrisie; but plaine work is not best as plainness is opposed to exactnesse. God loves to see some lace and trimming (in sincerity) upon what we doe; that is, it pleaseth him, when he seeth that we do our best, and that we not only do good, but garnish (to his praise) the good we do; he would have us not onely walk in the truth, but honour the truth by our walkings. He would have us not onely obey the doctrine, but (as the Apostle speakes, *Tit.* 2. 10.) *Adorne the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*; or (to use *Jobs* language) *Garnish it*, as he *by his Spirit hath garnished the heavens.*

And his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

His hand, that is, his power; hands are ascribed to God in a figure, or in allusion to men, who doe all their externall works by their hands. The hand is a noble and most serviceable Organ or Instrument, and therefore the Great things which God hath done, especially the heavens, are called *the work of his hands, and his handy-worke* (Ps. 19. 1.) yea the heavens are called *the work of his fingers* (Psal. 8. 3.) Which notes (I conceive) the exactnesse and curiosity of the worke, for such are those things which are wrought by the fingers. God being a Spirit invisible and incorporal, hath no formal hands, but he hath a vertuall hand. That Executive power by which he performeth and bringeth about his will in every thing is his hand. This hand

Hath formed the crooked serpent.

There are severall opinions about this *crooked Serpent*, who or what it should be that *Job* here meaneth. The Hebrew is, *The Serpent the barre*, That is, The serpent which is like a barre or bolt of iron. Some render *the flying or running serpent*, because as the bolt or barre of a doore runneth from side to side, so that from place to place. Mr. *Broughton* translates, *the long serpent*. But what is

נחש ברח *Serpentem vectem.* Pagn: *Serpentem fugacem.* Mont: *Serpentem oblongum.* Jun:

is this serpent? Divers interpreters connect the sence of these words with the former part of the verse, and so place this *crooked serpent* in the heavens, as belonging to the *garnishing* of them, or as if *Job* were giving a particular instance of what God hath done towards the *garnishing* of the heavens; *His hand hath formed the crooked serpent.* By which they understand the cœlestial circles or spheares which are wrapt and involved one within another as a serpent wrappeth and twineth himself in several rounds.

Vatablus viam lacteam intelligit.

Another following the same sence expoundeth it of that which Astronomers call the *milkey way*, which is a beauty in heaven, It being (as it were) the coalition of a number of little stars, which because they looke *white and milkish*, are therefore called the *milkey way*; Which also hath somewhat of the forme of a serpent, as is evident to the eye of any diligent observer.

A third, keeping still to that sence, expoundeth it yet more particularly of that speciall constellation in the heavens knowne among Astronomers by the name of *the dragon or serpent*; Which is supposed to be spoken of here by *Job* synecdochically, putting a part for the whole, or one for all the other Constellations with which the heavens are garnished; As if it had been said, *His hand hath formed the crooked serpent*, that is, all the Starrs in their several shapes and configurations, among which one representeth the forme of a Lion, another of a Bear, another of a Ram, and among many others one appeareth in the forme of a *Dragon or Crooked serpent, shooting himself forth or forward like the bolt of a doore.*

I find a fourth sort, who though they keep the *crooked serpent* of the Text still in the heavens, yet they bring it down to a lower heaven, that is, from the starry heaven, or from that heaven which is the subject of the Stars to the ayery heaven, which is the subject or shop in which the meteors, of all sorts, are bred & formed, and among them there is a meteor called by Naturalists, *the flying serpent*, As if the meaning of these words, *His hand hath formed the crooked serpent*, were this; God hath wrought & formed by his power & wisdome all those fiery meteors that are often seen as it were flying and shooting in the ayre, to the wonder of many, & the astonishment of not a few. There are the treasures of the snow & of the hayl, there God prepareth a way for the lightning of the thunder (*Job* 38.22.25.) Some learned interpreters insist much upon this Exposition, placing the *crooked serpent* in the heavens,

Draco volans.

heavens, either the upper or lower, as hath been shewed under four distinct titles: nor can it be denyed, but that the hand of God hath wrought all these things, much lesse can it be denyed that the working of these things is a great argument and demonstration of the power and wisdome of God, which is the purpose of *Job* in this place; therefore I shall not totally lay it aside. Neither yet will I leave it with the reader as the special meaning of this place, for this reason, because I much doubt, whether those poeticall phancies in giving such fictitious names to the Starres of heaven, as, *The Lion, the Beare, the Bull, the Dragon, the Serpent*, &c. of which Philosophers and Astronomers have made use, were at all borne, or ever so much as heard of in those elder times in which and before which *Job* lived. For though both in the 9. Chapter of this booke (*v.* 9) as also in the 38. Chapter (*ver.* 21, 22.) many Names are given to the Starres, which both the Greek and Latine translaters, & we following them in the English, render by those poetical names, yet the Originall Hebrew words beare no allusion at all to those phancies. As for instance, The Hebrew word which we render *Arcturus* (Ch: 9 9.) hath nothing at all in it signifying, *The Tayle of a Beare*. But here in this text, the word properly signifyeth a *crooked serpent*, and therefore to place it in the heavens as a Starre, when as in the times when this was written, there is so little, if any probability at all, that any such apprehensions were taken up by any, or any such allusive names given to the Starres, seems to me somewhat improper.

There is another veine of interpretation carrying the sence of these words, *His hand hath formed the crooked serpent*, to quite another point; for 'tis conceived by the Authors of this opinion, that as *Job* gave instance before in the workes of God above, his highest workes in nature, the garnishing of the heavens; so he now giveth instance in his workes below, or in his lowest works. This general interpretation is delivered two wayes distinctly.

First, That as God hath garnished the heavens, so he hath made and now governeth hel too, *His hand hath formed the crooked serpent*, that is, the Devill: That which favoureth this opinion, and hath possibly cast the thoughts of many upon it, is, that in Scripture the devil is often called *a serpent*, yea a *crooked serpent*, and that he acted a serpent as his instrument in the first temptation (*Gen.* 3. 1.) *Now the serpent was more subtil then any of the beasts*

beasts of the field, which the Lord God had made, and he said unto the woman, that is, The Devil in or by the Serpent said unto her, &c. He hath wel deserved to be called a Serpent who acted his first malice against mankind by the help of a Serpent, And for his thus early making use of a Serpent, he is called not only a serpent but, *that old serpent*, (*Rev.* 12.9) *The great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devill, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast us into the earth, and his Angels were cast out with him.* The hand of God hath formed this crooked serpent. To cleare which some interpret the former part of the verse in complyance with this sence, for the good Angels, thus; *By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens*, that is, he hath bestowed excellent gifts upon the Angels, who are the great ornament of heaven and may tropically be called heaven, as men are called earth. And as holy, wise, just, and faithfull men, are the ornaments, and garnishings of the earth, so the holy Angels are the garnishings of heaven, they having such mighty power and excellent gifts. Now (saith this interpretation) as God garnished the heavens with good Angels, so he *brought forth the crooked serpent* the Devil, by his working power. Not as if they, who stand up for this exposition, did affirme that God did make the Devil by his immediate hand, as he did the good Angels and the rest of the creatures; for when God *saw every thing that he had made, behold it was very good*, and therefore the crooked serpent as taken under this Notion for the Devil (who is *the Evill one*) could not be of his making. Therefore though the Devil according to his original or general nature, as an Angel was formed of God; yet the crookednes of his nature as well as of his wayes, which properly and formally denominate him a Devil was of himself, he having turned away from God; and defiled that state, by the freedome of his own will, in which he was created pure, and had society with his fellow-Angels, till God for his sin did (as it were) pull him and his Adhærents from the midst of them; and as the Apostle Jude saith (*v.* 6) *Hath reserved them* (together) *in chains of darknes unto the judgement of the great day.* But I conceive that *Job* is not here speaking of an Allegoricall or Metaphoricall serpent, such a one as the Devill is, but of a real and proper one; And therefore I lay by this exposition as unsutable to the text in hand.

Spiritus ejus ornavit cœlos *Vulg.* i. e. cœlestes spiritus ornamẽtis, scilicet spiritualium donorum Aquin. Et obstetricante manu ejus eductus est coluber tortuosus. Vulg.

Eduxit deus diabolum è medio Angelorum. Aquin.

And

And conclude, that *Job* having in the former part of the verse set forth the power and wisdome of God in garnishing the heavens, his meditation descendeth in this latter part of it, though not so low as hel, yet as low as the waters, especially the waters of the Sea, and there sheweth us the hand of God at work both in making and destroying, in forming and wounding the crooked serpent For the Hebrew word which we render, *hath formed*, signifies also *to wound*, and so we translate it (*Isa:* 51. 9) *Awake, awake, O arme of the Lord*, &c. *art not thou it which hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?* yea it is so translated by some in this text of *Job*. *His hand hath wounded the crooked serpent*. Which cometh neere that of the Prophet according to the bare literal reading (*Isa:* 27. 1.) *In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan, the peircing* (or as we put in the Margin, *the crossing like a bar*) *serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent, and he shall slay the Dragon that is in the Sea.* Where we may note by the way that our translaters render those very original words a *peircing serpent* in this text of *Isaiah*, which they render a *crooked serpent* in *Job*; and, I conceive, it is better translated, *peircing* (for so bolts or barrs are rather) then *crooked*, another word being also used in *Isaiah*, which we translate *crooked*. For *serpents* are both strait and long like a Barre, they are also crooked & can wind themselves into a circle when they please, or see it for their advantage. Now the *long Bar-like* (or as we say *crooked*) *serpent*, which *Job* here saith the hand of God hath formed, is according to this interpretation, the *Whale-fish*, or *Leviathan*, which is the greatest not onely of all the fishes in the Sea, but of all living creatures; & therefore may well be brought here by *Job* as an instance to demonstrate the mighty power of God, whether in forming or wounding of him; especially considering that God himselfe when he would humble and abase *Job* in the sight of his own meanesse, as he had led him to the meditation of many of his great workes in nature, throughout the 38, 39, and 40 Chapters of this, he bestowes the whole 41. Chapter in a large particular & Rhetorical description of the *Leviathan*; and though he had said of the *Behemoth* and *Elephant* (Ch. 40. 19) *He is the chief of the wayes of God:* yet he saith more of the Leviathan or Whale (*Ch.* 41. 33, 34) *Upon earth there is none like him, who is made without feare, he beholdeth all high things,* &c.

Malo hic cæli intelligi & balænam. Merc. *Cæli ornatu ad maris ornatũ tanquam ad aliud extremũ descendit.* Pined. *Intelligo Balænam insigne in imis opus divinæ potentiæ efficacitatem venustatis atque arbitrij ejus singulariter comprobans.* Coc.

he is a king over all the children of pride. As if he had said, The Elephant is the chiefe of all sensitive living creatures upon the earth, but the Whale is greater then the Elephant, therefore he exceeds all creatures moving upon the earth. The Whale is so vast & turbulent a living creature, that he is joyned with the Sea which is the vastest and most turbulent creature without life. Thus *Job* speakes (*Chap.* 7. 12.) *Am I a Sea or a Whale that thou settest a watch over me?* implying that the Whale is among sensitive creatures as the Sea is among insensitive the greatest and most unruly of them, and therefore hath as much need to be watched by a divine providence as the Sea it selfe hath. Thus the Psalmist describing the great workes of God, putteth the Leviathan or Whale among the chiefest of them (*Psal.* 104. 24, 25, 26) *O Lord, how manifold are thy workes! in wisdome hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches; so is the great and wide Sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small & great beasts. There goe the Ships, there is that Leviathan whom thou hast made to play therein.* Thus we see how the Scripture consents in exalting the power and wisdome of God in this part of his worke the forming of this long and mighty, or (as we translate the Substantive Epithete) *crooked serpent.* And therefore *Job* might wel claspe these two together (while he was studying to exemplifie in particulars the greatnes of the works of God) his garnishing or peopling the heavens with such infinite variety of Starres, especially with the Sunne, and his forming of and so storing the Sea with such infinite variety of fishes, especially with the Leviathan, For as the Sun is a Prince among the lights of heaven, so Leviathan is a Prince a King among the fishes of the Sea. His hand hath formed the *crooked* (or rather the long) *Serpent.* And if any should object against this interpretation, that it seems unsutable to call the Whale or Leviathan a Serpent. I answer, that the text in *Isaiah* (*Ch.* 27. 1.) before alledged may wel beare us out in it; which (though it be to be understood of the Devil or of his instruments the enemyes of the Churches peace and safety, yet) calleth Leviathan, the *peircing* (which word in the Original, as I hinted before is here in *Job* rendred crooked) *serpent*; and in the immediately following words, *That crooked serpent, and the Dragon that is in the Sea.*

Wherefore resting (chiefly if not only) in this interpretation, on that *Job* having gone up in his discourse to the heavens, and the garnishing of them, came down to the Sea, & to the furnishing thereof, and instances in that creature which is chief in the Sea, The Leviathan, thereby to exalt and lift up the glory of God in his works of creation and providence.

Observe.

The Sea as well as the heavens, and all the inhabitants thereof, declare the mighty works and workmanship of God.

As the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work (Ps. 19. 1.) So the earth declareth the glory of God, and the Sea sheweth his handy-work. The least creatures preach the power of God, how much more the greatest; All believers are taught of God, and every thing we see teacheth us somewhat of God, and this they teach us especially that God is the former of them all. The hand of God hath formed the Eagle, and a lesse powerfull hand then Gods could not forme a fly. The hand of God hath formed the Elephant, and a lesse powerfull hand then his could not forme a mouse. The hand of God hath formed Leviathan, and a hand lesse powerfull then his could not forme a shrimpe. As Jesus Christ was declared many wayes to be the Son of God, but (as the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 1. 4.) *He was declared to be the Son of God with power* (or *powerfully declared to be the Son of God*) *by the resurrection from the dead.* So all things that are created declare that their Creator is God; But he is declared with power or powerfully declared to be God by many of the creatures. Who can make any thing to live, but the living God? Who can make great things, but the great God?

His hand hath formed the crooked Serpent.

And seeing the Lord hath formed the crooked serpent, even those creatures that are most dreadfull and dangerous to man; then the most dreadfull and dangerous creatures are under the power of God, he formed them, and therefore he can restraine and curb them. As it is said of *Behemoth* (Job 40 19.) *He that made him can make his sword aproach unto him*, that is, though he be to strong for man, yet God who gave him that strength, hath infinitely more, and can easily Master him, yea and give a weak man skill and power to doe it: so though it be said (*Job* 41. 26.) of Leviathan that the sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold the

the speare, the dart, nor the habergeon, yet God, who made him, can make his sword approach to him, or as some render the words under hand, *His hand hath and can wound Leviathan the crooked Serpent; He can put a hooke in his nose, and bore his jaw through with a thorne.* And thus God can do also with those, who are Leviathans, and crooked Serpents in a figure, The Devill, and all cruel-minded men who doe his worke, and carry on his designe against the people of God, as is expressed in that lately alledged Scripture (*Isa:* 27. 1.) *In that day the Lord with his fore and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan, the peircing Serpent*, that is, those enemies and persecuters of his people, who seeme to be as strong and invincible as Leviathan, and as subtle and dangerous as the most peircing stinging Serpent. Thus the Lord assured his faithfull ones (*Isa:* 54 16, 17.) *That no weapon formed against them should prosper; for* (saith he) *I have created the Smith that bloweth the coales in the fire, and that bringeth forth an Instrument for his worke, and I have created the waster to destroy.* Therefore I can hinder the waster from destroying, & make all his weapons edglesse, pointlesse, no more able to wound, then a straw or a rush. How soone can God blunt and abate the keenest spirits of men, and weaken their strongest armes, when he seeth they will but do mischiefe with them? He that causeth motion can stop it; and he that giveth power can call it in, or breake it where it is. While God is on our side who made all; we need not feare who are made against us; Though they have teeth like Lyons, and stings like Serpents we are safe; The hand of God can kill and wound, for, *His hand hath formed the crooked Serpent.*

Vers. 14. *Lo, these are parts of his wayes, but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?*

Thus *Job* concludes; after he had given an enumeration or Induction of many particulars, he doth as it were hold them forth in his hand to the view of all men; *Behold, or, lo these are parts of his wayes.*

קצה *finem extremitatem denotat.*

The word which we render *parts*, signifieth the end or extremity of a thing. There is a twofold extremity; first, that which is utmost or furthest from us; secondly, that which is hithermost or neerest

neerest to us. The word takes in both, and is used for both in one text (*Psal.* 19. 6.) *His going forth* (that is, the going forth of the Sunne) *is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it*: As if he had said, the Sunne compasseth the heaven round, and visiteth both the hithermost and uttermost (as to us) extremityes of it In the present text of *Job* we are to understand it of the hithermost extremity, or of that which is next us, implying that there are many and much more glorious things to be spoken of God, if we were able to comprehend them & reach the uttermost end or extremity of them. And that it is so to be understood here, is plain from the next words, *But how little a portion is heard of him?* In compliance with which sence some render the text thus, *These are the edges or borders of his wayes*; as if *Job* had said, I have shewed you only the borders, I have not led you into the heart of the Country, or into the midst of the works and wayes of God, much lesse to the furthest extremity or outside of them. I have indeed spoken of very great and wonderfull things, yet all that I have said is but little to what might be said, or at least to what really is. I have given you as it were the parings and chipings of Gods workes, I have not gone to the bottome, nor reached the depth of them. So that *Job* seems to distinguish these effects and works of God, about which he had discoursed, from some greater works, which he was not able to attain unto, nor make any discovery of; There are not onely Celestiall, but super-celestiall workes of God, we cannot well apprehend, much lesse comprehend what he hath wrought under the heavens, which are only the outside of his works, much lesse those which are above the heavens: For as none of the works of God appeare to us, or have been found out by us in their fulnesse and utmost extent, so God hath done some great works which doe not at all appeare to us And those things which appeare are but small parts or parcels in comparison of those which as yet do not appear to us. *Lo, these are parts of his wayes.* The wayes of God are spoken of in Scripture under a twofold notion.

Ne me putetis omnia enarrasse, vix enim extremam partem attigi. Coc:

Ecce hæ sunt oræ viarum ejus. Coc:

Licet quæ dixi sensibus nostris, et judicio maxima esse videantur et verè sint stupenda respectu tamen divinæ potentiæ non sunt nisi, minutiæ, peripsemata minimaque particulæ eorum quæ fecit ac facere potest. Bold:

Extrema viæ erunt opera minora & nostri captus. Coc.

First, As the *wayes* in which God would have us walk; so the commandements and statutes of God, are called the wayes of God (*Psal.* 119 33.) *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keepe it unto the end.*

Secondly, The wayes of God are those wherein he comes and

Via dei illius opera sunt & agendi rationes quibus ad nos alie venire, dicitur quia in his prodit ad nos et progrediendo se magis magisq; nostris sensibus accommodat. Coc.

and reveales himselfe to us. As that is a mans way wherein or whereby he is knowne, so in whatsoever God manifesteth or maketh himselfe known to us, that is the way of God (*Isa:* 55. 8.) *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes; saith the Lord.* That is, my wayes of mercy are as farre above your wayes of mercy, as your dutyes are below my wayes of holinesse; yea what are your wayes of sinfulnesse in doing evil, to my wayes of graciousnes in pardoning the evils which ye have done? Man hath a vast and a large heart in sinning, but the vastnes & largenes of mans heart in sinning, is but scantnes & narrownes to the largenes & vastnes of Gods heart in pardoning. We may understand the Lord speaking in either of or in both these sences; *My wayes are not as your wayes.* And in general, *the way of God* is that wherein he acteth or revealeth himself toward us, whether it be in mercy or in Judgement, in love or terrour. God hath some wayes which we may call foul and troublesome wayes, such are his wayes of judgment: he hath other ways, which we may call faire and delightsome wayes, such are all his wayes of mercy. And as God comes to us continually in one or other of these wayes of providence so he came forth of old in the way of creation (*Prov:* 8. 22.) *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his workes of old.* When God first came forth, and appeared in making the world, *he possessed me* (saith Wisedome) that is, from everlasting. A way is, that wherein we goe out, and shew our selves openly or abroad. And hence it is elegantly said, that Creation was the beginning of Gods way, for then God did as it were goe out from himself into his works, and in his workes he shewed himselfe openly, who was before hidden in himselfe from Eternity. God had infinite immanent or internall acts in himselfe before, or rather God was one infinite eternal immanent Act before. But the first external transient act of God, or the first expression of himselfe (who can never be expressed, to the life, as he is) was by the work of creation; and therefore that was *the beginning of his way.* And of this way, the way of creation, as also of those of providence *Job* speaketh when he saith, *lo, these are parts of his wayes.*

Accommodare ad subjectam materiam viæ dei dici possunt

And hence the Scripture calleth storms and tempests, thunder, and lightning, in which God appeareth so terrible, the wayes of God (*Nah:* 1. 3.) *The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and*

and will not at all acquit the wicked: The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storme, and the clouds are the dust of his feete; that is, God declareth himselfe to be God by his judgements and angry dispensations, which like boisterous winds and storms, which, like clouds and darknes afflict the children of men, *loe these are parts of his wayes.*

Ipsefacere namque in hujusmodi mirabil bus actis naturis nibus ille cæ nere ad nos dicitur.

Hence note.

First, *All that we know of the works of God is but a part.*

As 'tis said of *Salomon* (1 Kings 4. 33) that *he spake of trees, from the Cedar tree, that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssope that springeth out of the wall: He spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes,* so *Job* had been discoursing from the heights of heaven to the bottome of the Sea, yea to the bottome of hel; and yet he comes off, and saith, *loe these are parts of his wayes.* He that speaketh and knoweth many things, yea he that speaketh all that he knoweth, hath yet spoken onely a part of that which is knowable. The Apostle saith (1 *Cor:* 13. 9, 10.) *We know in part, and we prophecy in part;* Many know more then they utter or prophecy, but no man can utter or prophecy more then he knoweth; We know but a part of what is to be knowne; and we know what we know but in part, and therefore when we have spoken our all, we have spoken but a part. Though every Godly man knoweth all things needfull for him to doe and beleeve, yet the holyest man on earth doth not know all that God hath done. God hath some reserved and secret wayes into which he doth not lead his people. As the best of Saints see but the Back-parts of God in this life, so they see but a part of the wayes of God in this life, *lo, these are parts of his wayes.*

Again, Taking the original word as it signifies not only a part but the outside or extreame of any thing.

Note.

That which we know of the workes of God, is not onely no more then a part of his works, but 'tis indeed only the outside of his works.

'Tis but as the hem to a garment, or the borders to a Continent. When we have travelled as farre as we can, and as we think into the very heart of the workes of God, yet we have gone no further

further then the borders of them; And it is, as if a man coming to discover this Island, should only walk upon the shoar where he dis-embarkt, and there viewing the cliffes and rockes, the sands and neerest Marishes, should take upon him to report the state of the whole Island: what hath this man seene? nothing but the extremity, the border of the Land, and can he make a compleate discovery of the whole? he hath not seen the pleasant hils and vales, the towns, and Cities, the forts and Castles, the trade and riches, the customes and manners of the people; no man can know the chief things of a Nation or Country that stands only upon the shoare All that we know of the works of God, is only the shoare, and outside of them; we cannot reach the heart, nor fathome the bottome of them. The workes of the Lord are great, (*Psal.* 111. 2.) *Sought out of all them that have pleasure therein*, that is, they who take pleasure in them do their utmost, to finde out the utmost of them; A godly man is as industrious to understand the wayes and workes of God as he is to understand his word, yet he cannot reach either fully; And therefore that Psalme hath an excellent conclusion, to satisfie us in our exclusion (as yet) from the perfect knowledge of these things. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdome, a good understanding have all they that doe his commandements*; As if the Lord had said, though while ye labour to seek out my works, yet, ye cannot finde them out to perfection, be not discouraged, as if ye were shortned in wisdome, and knowledge; for the feare of my name is wisdome enough for you, and obedience to my commandements is the best understanding; let this satisfie you while ye know but a part of my wayes. And if we know but a part, and that the outside of the wayes and works of God, then surely we cannot know all of God himselfe: as it followeth in the next words,

And how little a portion is heard of him?

שמצ *pars partioula murmur tenuis susurrus. Susurrum verborum ejus. Symmach: ut deinceps cum*

The Original notes any thing which is little, or a little portion of any thing. Hence some render it *a drop*, which is a little or the least portion of water. So the vulgar and the Seventy, *We have hardly heard a little drop of his speech* Others render it a *whisper*, which is but a little portion of a voice. *How little a whisper have we heard of him?* The works of God are as it were a whisper concern-

concerning him, all that we see, or can say, makes but a kinde of silent report of God, in comparison to what he is, or to what might be said of him. And so the word *whisper*, is opposed to thunder in the close of the verse, *But the thunder of his power who can understand?* As if *Job* had said, *All that I have spoken of God is but a whisper, there is a Thunder of his power, which I am neither able to utter, nor to understand.* All creatures speake a God, yea they speak much of God, as the Apostle affirmeth for the conviction of the Gentiles in their Idolatrous departures from him (*Rom*: 1. 20.) *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are cleerly seene, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and God-head, so that they are without excuse*: The creatures speake loud enough to stop mans mouth and leave him without all excuse, yet comparatively they doe but whisper, there is a thunder of God infinitely lower then their voice. So that *Job* calleth those workes of God wherein he had instanced a whisper or stil voice, because though they signifie to us and declare the glory of their Author; yet they are not a full declaration of it, but only such a one as is accommodated to our childish capacity. All that they speake or can speake of God, yea all that can be spoken of God by the wisest of men, is only as a whisper to thunder, or as a drop to the Ocean; But I shall not say more of the elegancy of this word here, it having been already opened (*Ch.* 4. 12.) where *Eliphaz* thus bespeaks *Job*, *Now a thing was secretly* (or as we put in the Margin, *by stealth*) *brought to me, and mine eare received a little* (a whisper, a drop) *thereof, in thoughts from visions of the night*, &c. *All that we know now, of God and his wayes is but little to what we know not, and but little to what we shall know hereafter*; every day we heare great things reported and preached of God both to our eyes and ears, and though we should have sermon upon sermon, line upon line all the dayes of our lives, yet at the last day of our lives we must say, *How little a portion have we heard of him?* The thunder of his power, the lowdest and clearest speakings of it, are reserved to that state when our ears shall be bored and our hearts proportionably enlarged to receive it.

ingenti tonitru comparet, vix parvam stillam sermonis ejus audierimus. Vulg. Sept. *In Hebræo tantum est paululū, pauxillumvè sine ulla guttæ, sive stillæ mentione.* מה שמצ *quanta exiguitas.*

Opera hæc nominat susurrum sermonis ab usu et fine. Sunt enim opera dei significativa, indicant gloriam authoris, sed non unt clarus sermo verum submissior susurrus sc. indices leviores et benigniores, & quasi puerorum magistri non docentes omnia sen accommodata captui. Coc. *Quam pauca sunt quæ scimus respectu eorum quæ nescimus.*

Further, *Job* had been long speaking of the works and wayes of God, yet concludeth, *how little a portion is heard of him?* why doth he not rather say; *how little a portion is heard of them?* the reason

reason is because what ever is said of the wayes, and workes of God is to discover God, rather then to discover them. To speak of the earth and seas, of the ayre and fire, of thunder and lightening of the heavens and starres, is not an extolling of the works of God, but an extolling of God in and for his workes.

Hence note.

The works of God should lead us to God himselfe.

Our study of the creature should be to gain a clearer light and knowledge of the Creator. There are many expressions, and impressions of God upon the things which he hath made, & we never see them as we ought, till in them we see their maker. A critical eye lookes upon a picture, not so much to see the colours or the paines as to discerne the skil and workmanship of the Painter or Limner, yea some (as the Apostle speaks in reference *to spirituals*) have sences so exercised about *these artificials* that they will read the *Artists* name in the forme and exquisiteness of his art; An *Apelles* or a *Michael Angelo* needs not put his name to his worke, his work proclaimes his name to those who are judicious beholders of such kinde of works: How much more (as the Psalmist speakes) *that the name of God is neere, doe his wondrous works* (both of creation and providence) *declare* to all discreete beholders? that which the eye and heart of every godly man is chiefly upon, is to find out and behold *The name*, that is, the wisdome, power and goodnesse of God in all his works, both of creation and providence; It were better for us never to enjoy the creature, then not to enjoy God in it; and it were better for us not to see the creature, then not to have a sight of God in it; And yet when we have seen the most of God which the creature can shew us, we have reason to say, *how little a portion is seene of him?* and when we have heard the most of God that can be reported to us from the creation, we have reason to say as *Job* here doth, *how little a portion is heard of him?* and to conclude as he doth this verse and Chapter.

But the thunder of his power who can understand?

This *thunder of his power*, may be taken,

First, Strictly, and in the letter for natural thunder; for, even that

that is numbred in Scripture among the wonderfull and most dreadfull works of God. The Scripture calleth it also the voice of God (*Psal.* 29. 3.) *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, the God of Glory thundereth.* Thus a learned paraphrast connects these words with the former; As if *Job* had said; *Now that I have said all that I can, how little a thing is it in comparison of him and his greatness; as may appeare by one instance more, the power and majesty which he utters in his thunder, which who can sufficiently admire? and therefore none can fully understand.*

Non aliter de tonitruo loquuntur sacræ scripturæ quam de dei voce magnifica aquarum abyssi, plenaq; minarum.

Secondly, The Thunder of his power, is any extraordinary worke of God, especially his dreadfull and terrible workes of Judgment For by them he speaks out his infinite power and majesty in the ears of men as it were by thunder. Of such a voice we read (*Psal.* 68. 32, 33.) *Sing unto God ye kingdomes of the earth, O sing praises unto the Lord, Selah.* Who this Lord is, and how he manifests himselfe is set forth in the next words, *to him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old, lo he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice.* Thus also the Prophet *Isaiah* (Chap: 30. 30) describes the Lord coming forth for the rescue of his people, and the utter ruine of the *Assyrian* Army. *And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lightning downe of his arme, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailestones.* For though that destruction of the *Assyrians* was effected by the ministery of an Angel (*Isa:* 37. 36.) yet, doubtlesse it was not done in silence, but either with an amazing tempest, mixt with thunder and lightning, or with such confusion and terror as appeared like one. In the Booke of the *Revelation* (which hath as one of the Ancients speaketh, as *many misteryes as words*) the dreadfull judgements propheceyed to come upon the world in the severall Ages of it, are expressed by Thunder (*Revel:* 10. 4.) *And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.* And as elsewhere, so especially in this book of *Job*, we find, those things which carry the greatest strength and terror in them, expreft by thunder (*Job* 39. 19) *Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou cloathed his neck with thunder;* that is, hast thou made the horse who is so strong and terrible? And at the 25. verse

In signibus vero tam sit magnificus quidem sed non tam splendet quam cum tonitrua concutiat animo percipiendis quis tandem per tuerit. Bez.

verse (treating still of the horse) *he saith among the trumpets, ha, ha; and he smelleth the battaile afarre off, the thunder of the Captaines, and the shouting* that is, the horse is pleased to heare the Great Commanders speake with a loud voice, either directing, threatning, or encouraging their Souldiers. Thus, *the Thunder of Gods power*, is some wonderfull act of his power, which lifts up its voice (as it were) like Thunder. This *who can understand?* none can. The word signifies also to weigh and consider, so some render it here, *Who can sufficiently consider the Thunder of his power?* who can consider it as he ought; either, first according to the depth and mysteriousnesse of it, or, secondly, according to the dignity and worthinesse of it.

Thirdly, These words, *who can understand the thunder of his power?* may be expounded of the highest and clearest publication of his power, The thundering of it out As if *Job* had said, *I have whispered a little to you, but if God should thunder out himselfe, or if his workes were spoken out (as they deserve) in thunder*, the minds of men would be amazed, and their understandings confounded, *The thunder of his power who can understand?* 'Tis usual among the learned to expresse high eloquence, and strong confidence of speech; by thundering. It was said of *Alcibiades, that he thundred Greece*; He was a man so mighty in Elocution, that he made his hearers tremble. And hence *Christ himself surnamed two of his own Disciples (James the son of Zebedee, and John the Brother of James) Boanerges*, which is, *the Sons of Thunder*. They did not speake (as we say) *like a mouse in a cheese*, but with a great voice, and with a greater spirit; they spake the messages of heaven as if it thundered from heaven. There may be a great force in a low voice, while what is spoken comes with much clearnesse of reason, and strength of Authority, or (as the Apostle gives it) *in the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit*; but when all these are conveyed by a mighty voice, a voice like thunder, how forceable are they? *Basil was said to Thunder in his doctrine, and lighten in his life.* Such (to the height) was that voice of words (in Mount *Horeb* at the giving of the Law) *Which voice they that heard, intreated that the Word should not be spoken to them any more* (Heb: 12. 19.) that is, that it should not be spoken to them any more in that manner, or by an immediate voice from God, as appeares (*Exod:* 20. *v:* 18, 19.) *And all the*

Hæc nos cogitata et levitèr cõmemorata obstupefaciũt quid si majora quæ illius potestate continentur, &c. Pined.

Quis comprehendere potest ingentes domini virtutes, quæ velut vocem tonitrui more attonant præ magnitudine et multitudine. Merc.

Quis satis consideret. Pisc.

Tonitru fortitudinũ vocat sermonem clarum, fortitèr prolatum, quod sit velut tonitru maximum. Coc.

Tonitru potentiæ, i. e. *Ipsum intonantem & loquentem coram. Argumentum est per comparationem majoris* Jun.

Tonare eos dicimus qui oratienis et eloquentiæ vi maximè pollent. Novar.

the people saw the Thunderings and the lightnings, and the noyse of the Trumpet, &c. And they said unto Moses, speak thou with us and we will heare; but let not God speak with us, lest we dye. We cannot understand the thunder of his power.

Hence note.

Man is not able to receive and bear those highest discoveries of God.

God can speak in such a light as will blind the eyes of man, and in such a language as will rather astonish then instruct him. As among beleevers, they who are carnal and babes in Christ, are not able to eate *strong meat*, they must *be fed with milk* (as the Apostles speakes, 1 *Cor.* 3. 2.) So we may say of all Beleevers, even of those that are strongest. God doth onely whisper and speak gently to them, *the thunder of his power they cannot understand.* For as there is a *peace of God which passeth all understanding* (Phil. 4. 7.) they that have it not, understand nothing of it, and they that have it, understand but little of it; *it passeth all understanding*, not a naturall understanding only, but also a spirituall. And as there is *a love of Christ passing knowledge* (Eph. 3. 19.) which yet we should labour to know; a love which hath an incomprehensible height, and length and bredth, and depth in it, which yet all the Saints are labouring to comprehend, so there is a manifestation of the will and works of God, a Thunder of his power, which were it made and spoken out to us, our understanding could not graspe nor comprehend, how much soever we should desire and labour to comprehend it. And therefore God is pleased to put the *treasure* of his mind and messages *in earthen vessels*; not only as the Apostle gives the reason (2 Cor. 4 7.) *That the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us*; but he doth it also condiscending to our weakness, lest if he should give out this treasure immediately from himselfe, or should put it into some heavenly vessel, we should not be able to bear *the excellency*, or (as *Job* here speaks) *The Thunder of his power.*

Thus after a very long ventilation of the Question between *Job* and his friends, we are arrived at the Conclusion of their dispute. *Job* hath answered two of his friends thrice, the third (*Zophar* I mean) only twice. He it seemes, gave out and sate downe, whe-

whether satisfied or wearyed, whether having no more to say, or being unwilling to say any more, or thinking that enough had been said already, I determine not. But though *Jobs* friends have done arguing against him, yet he hath not done arguing for himselfe; Which he doth in five entire Chapters, twice called the *continuation of his Parable*. In what sence he calleth his ensuing speech a parable, together with the subject matter of it, may through the Gratious presence, and *supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who hath helped hitherto, and hath not suffered that little oyle in the cruse to fayle*, shine forth with a clearer light.

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